




MEMORANDUM

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS
FROM: CAROLYN LEHR, CITY MANAGER 
DATE: AUGUST 17, 2010
SUBJECT: PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT FOR
ADVOCACY SERVICES TO OBTAIN FEDERAL
FUNDING FOR SAN RAMON CANYON STABILIZATION
PROJECT

Staff Coordinator: Sara Singer, Senior Administrative Analyst 

RECOMMENDATION

Authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to sign a FY10-11 Professional Services Agreement with a federal advocacy firm to seek federal funding for the San Ramon Canyon Stabilization Project.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

The San Ramon Canyon Stabilization Project (a.k.a. the Palos Verdes Drive East/Palos Verdes Drive South Roadway Stabilization Project) is located in the southeastern corner of the City at the border of Rancho Palos Verdes and the City of Los Angeles. The San Ramon Canyon also adjoins Los Angeles County's Regional Friendship Park. The canyon provides a natural drainage course for neighborhoods near Palos Verdes Drive East. Landslide induced rock and soil deposits in the canyon bottom are being transported by heavy rainfall events down the canyon and are flooding the roadway where Palos Verdes Drive South turns into 25th Street. In addition to the flooding problems, the drainage facilities are being overwhelmed and the nearby roadways are severely endangered and residents' homes downstream are threatened. The City Council has identified this project as one of the Council's high priorities and has adopted the following 2010 Tactical Goal: *Implement the Lower San Ramon Canyon Stabilization Project.*

Undertaking a problem of this complexity requires time to study, plan, design and construct an effective solution. Environmental, economic and construction issues must all be addressed. One of the most significant challenges faced by the City is the issue of funding

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this project. Preliminary estimates have shown that the project will cost approximately \$19.5 million for a comprehensive solution. The City of Rancho Palos Verdes has been working with the other stakeholders including the City of Los Angeles and Los Angeles County as well as local, state and federal elected officials to discuss possible funding solutions and forge cooperation to move forward on this project. A three-way partnership letter was signed in December 2009 by Los Angeles County Supervisor Don Knabe, Los Angeles City Councilwoman Janice Hahn, and RPV Mayor Stefan Wolowicz all committing to fund a portion of the total project cost. The City of Rancho Palos Verdes has commissioned a Project Study Report (PSR), which will identify alternative solutions, and the environmental, engineering and economic implications of those alternatives. This study is expected to be completed in December 2010.

The City's grant consultant, Blais & Associates, assisted the City in applying for various federal funding options last year including the following:

- \$9.75 million funding requests to Senator Boxer and Senator Feinstein's offices in May 2010 for funding through the nation's Water Resources Development Act (WRDA).
- Congressman Dana Rohrabacher included a \$9.75 million funding request in the reauthorization of the nation's transportation bill (SAFETEA-LU). He has since taken a "no earmark" stance because of the budget deficit but the City is hopeful he will seek this funding in the next fiscal year.
- RPV staff has requested \$2 million in funding from the annual Transportation, Community, System Preservation account and \$900,000 from the annual Energy and Water Development bill.

Due to the competitive nature of pursuing federal funding for large capital projects, Blais & Associates has recommended that the City hire a professional federal advocacy firm to assist in developing a strategy for obtaining federal funding for this critical project and provide the City with a presence in Washington, D.C. to navigate through the complex political process. In June 2010, L.A. County Supervisor Don Knabe, L.A. City Councilwoman Janice Hahn, RPV Mayor Stefan Wolowicz and key staff from all agencies met to discuss this project and the various tasks that each agency should be responsible for. One of the key responsibilities for RPV was to coordinate the hiring of a federal advocacy firm to assist in the process of securing federal funds for the comprehensive solution.

The City has received two excellent proposals from federal advocacy firms in Washington, D.C. Both firms have numerous clients throughout California and have key contacts in Washington, which will be invaluable as the City continues to seek funding for this project. The firms have significant experience in securing SAFETEA-LU and WRDA funding, in addition to obtaining funding through other sources for major infrastructure projects. The San Ramon/Tarapaca City Council Subcommittee (Councilmember Missetich and Councilmember Stern) will be interviewing both firms on Thursday, August 12th, and will develop a recommendation which will be provided as an addendum to this report in advance of the August 17th City Council meeting. Letters from both firms have been

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provided as attachments to this report. The recommended firm's detailed proposal will also be provided in the addendum as part of the Subcommittee's recommendation.

FISCAL IMPACT

The Professional Services Agreement would include an expenditure of \$40,000 plus reimbursable expenses for the remaining FY10-11. This budgeted amount will include a monthly retainer of \$4,000 for federal advocacy services plus an additional \$10,000 allowance for any related reimbursable expenses related to this contract. Staff has identified \$50,000 in remaining available appropriations from FY09-10. All FY09-10 continuing appropriations will be presented to the City Council for approval at the September 7, 2010 City Council meeting.

Attachments: Proposal Letter from Carpi, Clay & Smith
 Proposal Letter from Federal Advocates, Inc.



August 9, 2010

Ms. Carolyn Lehr
City Manager
Rancho Palos Verdes City Hall
30940 Hawthorne Blvd
Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275

Dear Ms. Lehr:

Carpi Clay & Smith is pleased to provide you with an overview of our Qualifications for Federal Advocacy Services. Organized as a California corporation and based in Washington, DC, we are a full service government relations firm that specializes in providing strategic counsel and implementing effective and successful federal advocacy programs on behalf of numerous California local governments and related public agencies.

This overview outlines our qualifications, briefly describes certain team members, explains our general approach and outlines certain past successes on behalf of public agencies. Our broad mix of clients and professional backgrounds give us a true grounding in the needs of California institutions and the particular challenges facing local governments at the federal level. We offer objective, results-oriented counsel and a focused government relations program.

We are a hands-on firm that provides honest assessments to our clients, is accountable and delivers results. The advocacy community in Washington, DC is very competitive. In light of this, we are very proud that our average client retention rate is 18 years. Moreover our rate of return on client investment is extremely high and a demonstration of our professionalism and ability. Our track record of securing funding and regulatory relief for clients is impressive. This is because we are direct advocates and work closely with our clients to develop a meaningful and realistic assessment of their needs and opportunities for success within the context of an ever changing legislative and regulatory landscape.

Our firm is prepared to begin working with you immediately. If you have questions regarding the information we are providing, please let me know. We look forward to discussing our qualifications with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Kenneth Carpi", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Kenneth Carpi
Managing Partner

August 10, 2010

Carolyn Lehr
City Manager
City of Rancho Palos Verdes
30940 Hawthorne Blvd.
Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275

RE: Proposal for Federal Legislative Lobbying Services on behalf of the City of Rancho Palos Verdes, CA

Dear Ms. Lehr:

Pursuant to our conversation, Federal Advocates, Inc. is pleased to submit this proposal for Federal Legislative Lobbying services on behalf of the City of Rancho Palos Verdes (RPV). We believe that our Firm offers a unique opportunity to blend our expertise in understanding the needs of the City with the strengths of our outstanding advocacy group in Washington, D.C. We are proud of the Principals of the Firm, who will lead efforts to obtain Federal funds and policies for the City. They are experienced as former congressional and executive staff, and have a proven track record working with local governments, trade associations and numerous other clients.


The team that will lead the implementation of activities outlined in the proposal is bi-partisan, politically agile, highly seasoned, and embodies an extraordinary level of professionalism and expertise. The combination of our presence and influence at the Federal level provides a unique value of proposition in terms of commitment and ability to bring the City's needs to successful completion.

The attached proposal outlines our suggested scope of work and related information in greater detail. It is our intention to demonstrate, without equivocation, that: (1) every effort and resource available to Federal Advocates will be enlisted to expand the City's engagement at the Federal level in such a way that positively informs strategic communications, and increases visibility and viability of funding and policy opportunities; (2) the members of our Firm have the experience, ability, acumen, political agility and relationships needed to ensure the City's most timely and effective movement across a nuanced Federal spectrum and field of play; and, (3) working collaboratively with the City, we can get the job done. Federal Advocates understands that a key to the success of this effort is our commitment to on-going communications and working in partnership with the City.

The San Ramon Canyon Stabilization and Restoration Project, as well as the PVDE/PVDS Roadway Stabilization Project, are the centerpieces of this effort. We are excited to have an opportunity to be part of a partnership that could lead to the successful funding of these much-needed projects.

On behalf of the entire Federal Advocates team, we look forward to working with the City and leveraging our strengths with yours for successful results.

Sincerely,



Sante Esposito
President