



## Request for City Council Committee Action from the Department of Intergovernmental Relations

**Date:** May 9, 2014

**To:** Chair Elizabeth Glidden and Vice Chair Alondra Cano

**Referral to:** Intergovernmental Relations Committee

**Subject:** FaegreBD Consulting for continued federal representation services in Washington, D.C.

**Recommendation:** That the proper city officers be authorized to execute Amendment #2 to Contract# C-35752 for continued federal representation services in Washington, D.C. The annual amount will remain the same, \$120,000.

**Previous Directives:** The city after completing an RFP process entered into a contract with FaegreBD Consulting in April 2012 for 12 months. The contract was extended for a second year in June 2013.

### Department Information

Prepared by: IGR Staff

Approved by: Gene Ranieri, IGR Director \_\_\_\_\_

Presenters in Committee: Gene Ranieri

### Reviews

- Permanent Review Committee (PRC): Approval Yes Date September 11, 2011

### Financial Impact

Action is within current department budget.

### Supporting Information:

The contract with FaegreBD Consulting (Firm) was for one year. As per the RFP the contract can be extended for up to two years. This extension is for the second year. The Firm has been engaged to assist the City in its business with the Congress and federal agencies.

The contract outlined two broad functions – Communication/Information and Advocacy. Both functions include advice and consultation with city officials, other Firm members, federal officials and staff of national municipal organizations.

Among the communication/information activities are meeting with city officials in Washington, D.C, conference calls, notification of available federal grant opportunities, assisting in developing the city's federal agenda, and liaison with federal agencies to provide or obtain information.

Advocacy includes presenting the city's positions and concerns to congressional offices, federal agencies and national municipal organizations, and non-governmental public interest groups focused on such issues as transportation, and housing. Advocacy can take numerous forms and during the term of the contract the Firm has arranged for meetings of city officials with Congressional and federal officials, developing multi-city letters or communications to advance a position and meeting with federal agency officials to present the city's position on such issues as invasive carp, youth violence, housing, urban agriculture and tax policy.

## **Communication/Information**

### **1. Meet With City Officials.**

During the contract year the Firm's representatives met in Washington, D.C., with city council members, the Mayor and city staff during the National League of Cities' Congressional Cities Conference, U.S. Conference of Mayors and at meetings with federal agencies (Economic Development Administration, Housing and Urban Development and members of Congress and congressional staff). The Firm's staff arranged for briefings by congressional staff with city officials.

Representatives of the Firm also visited the city in August 2013 to meet with elected officials and city staff.

### **2. Conference Calls.**

Approximately 30 conference calls have been completed in 2013. The calls are organized by the IGR Office. A fixed time (2PM Wednesday) is scheduled for the conference call which usually lasts 45 minutes. The agenda is distributed to a list of city staff. On occasion, staff is added as issues arise. For example, additional CPED staff was invited on the call for the invasive carp.

In addition to the conference calls, the Firm has arranged for conference calls with city staff on specific issues. IGR staff participates in these calls which included discussions regarding HUD programs, Surface Transportation Board, and the Department of Agriculture.

### **3. Information on Funding Opportunities And Provide Assistance.**

Despite the fiscal condition of the federal government, the Firm has identified funding opportunities related to criminal justice, health, housing and economic development and homeland security. In addition the Firm has provided information on the policies of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) relating to grants management. The city has continued to submit applications to continue federal funding currently received by the city. The Firm has provided guidance on the applications and future funding trends. For example, the Firm participated in discussions related to the Promise Zone application and provided insights into the underlying policies related to location-based grants.

## **Advocacy (Policy and Resources)**

The following are examples of the Firm's involvement in advocating for the city.

### **1. Invasive Carp Mitigation.**

The Firm has represented the city at agency meetings regarding the closure of the locks and dams and has in cooperation with the Congressional offices worked on the passage of an amendment to the Senate water bill. The amendment would close the locks if commercial activity in terms of tonnage declines below a certain threshold. The amendment is in the House and Senate water resources bills that is now in conference committee.

### **2. Youth Violence Prevention Forum.**

The City along with four other cities was selected to be included in the Department of Justice's Youth Violence Prevention Forum. The Firm advised city staff on the application criteria and arranged meetings with city staff and DoJ. The City has received grant funds and training as a result of participation in the forum.

### **3. Transit.**

Along with representatives of Lockridge Grindal Nauen, the Firm has had several meetings with Congressional staff, Surface Transportation Board and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) officials to discuss the city's transit projects and obtain guidance regarding the FTA and Surface Transportation Board funding and procedures.

**4. Healthy Food Initiatives.** The Firm has worked with congressional offices to advocate for funding for the USDA to support urban food initiatives. The recently enacted farm bill includes the program which authorizes \$225 million for urban food programs.