

# CITY OF PALM DESERT STAFF REPORT

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MEETING DATE: September 26, 2024

PREPARED BY: Joe Barron, Senior Contracts and Grants Analyst  
Chris Escobedo, Assistant City Manager

SUBJECT: AWARD CONTRACTS TO MULTIPLE CONSULTANTS FOR GRANT  
WRITING AND ADVOCACY SERVICES

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## **RECOMMENDATION:**

1. Award Contracts to The Criscom Company, Ardurra Group, Inc., and Engineering Solutions Services for the grant writing and advocacy services for an aggregate amount between selected firms, not to exceed \$200,000 per fiscal year.
2. Authorize the City Attorney to make any necessary nonmonetary changes to the agreements.
3. Authorize the City Manager to execute the agreements and any other documents necessary to effectuate this action, in accordance with Section 3.30.170 of the Palm Desert Municipal Code.

## **BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:**

The City currently has an agreement with Townsend Public Affairs (TPA) for grant writing and advocacy services that expires June 30, 2024. TPA has significantly boosted our grants portfolio from approximately \$1.5 million to \$13.1 million, which include Southern California Association of Governments, Regional Utilities To Support Housing for (8M), Transportation Housing and Urban Development FY25 Appropriations, Cook Street Bridge for (5M), and U.S. Department of Energy, Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program for (118K). To further expand the City's grant portfolio and reduce the financial impact on the General Fund, staff recommends engaging additional firms to ensure the City fully leverages available funding opportunities.

On June 27, 2024, a Request for Proposals (RFP) for grant writing and advocacy services was issued via OpenGov, resulting in nine submissions. An internal selection team, comprising representatives from the Finance Department, Public Works Department, Library Department, and City Manager's Office, reviewed the proposals and shortlisted the top three candidates for further consideration. Based on the qualifications, experience, and key personnel of the top firms, the selection team agreed to conduct interviews.

Following the interview process, the team concluded that the City would benefit most by selecting all three consultants, as each firm brings a distinct niche or area of expertise.

If approved, the contracts will be managed through a task order format. The City will request task proposals from the consultants, review the associated costs, and assign each task to the most qualified firm with expertise in that particular grant type. All tasks and expenses will be carefully monitored to ensure that the combined contract amounts do not exceed \$200,000 per fiscal year.

**Legal Review:**

This report has been reviewed by the City Attorney's Office.

**FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

\$200,000 has been budgeted in Account No. 1104159-4430900 for this purpose. There is no additional impact to the General Fund with this action.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. The Criscom Company Agreement
2. The Criscom Company Proposal
3. Ardurra Group Agreement
4. Ardurra Group Proposal
5. Engineering Solutions Agreement
6. Engineering Solutions Proposal