



# AGENDA REPORT

**TO:** Ed Reiskin  
City Administrator

**FROM:** Elinor Buchen  
Mayor's Office

**SUBJECT:** One Year Extension of Federal and  
State Lobbyist Contracts

**DATE:** May 27, 2020

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City Administrator Approval

Date:

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## RECOMMENDATION

**Staff Recommends That The City Council approve:**

**A RESOLUTION AMENDING CITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION NO. 86906 C.M.S. TO AUTHORIZE A ONE-YEAR CONTRACT EXTENSION WITH TOWNSEND PUBLIC AFFAIRS TO SERVE AS THE CITY OF OAKLAND STATE LOBBYIST FROM OCTOBER 1, 2020 TO SEPTEMBER 30, 2021 FOR A TOTAL AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$150,000, FOR A TOTAL CONTRACT AMOUNT OF \$600,000 (FOR A TOTAL OF FOUR YEARS); AND, TO SERVE AS THE CITY OF OAKLAND FEDERAL LOBBYIST FROM OCTOBER 1, 2020 TO SEPTEMBER 30, 2021 FOR AN AMOUNT NOT EXCEED \$72,000, FOR A TOTAL CONTRACT AMOUNT OF \$288,000 (FOR A TOTAL OF FOUR YEARS); AND WAIVING THE ADVERTISING AND REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL/QUALIFICATIONS REQUIREMENT ASSOCIATED WITH SAID CONTRACTS**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The attached resolution is to extend the contracts with Townsend Public Affairs (TPA) for federal and state lobbying services for one year from October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021.

As the Covid-19 crisis has unfolded, the City has relied heavily on Townsend Public Affairs at both the state and federal levels to share daily (and often more frequent) updates on legislation and funding opportunities and to support the City's advocacy efforts.

Given the ongoing need for quick turnaround and extensive support on both state and federal issues, and given TPA's long relationship and deep understanding of the City's needs, the Mayor's office is requesting that TPA's contract be extended at the same rate (\$150,000 for state lobbying services and \$72,000 for federal lobbying services) and with the same scope for one additional year.

## BACKGROUND / LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

Townsend Public Affairs has provided state legislative lobbyist services to the city since 2006 and federal legislative lobbying services since 2011.

City Council (or Committee)  
Meeting Date

Townsend Public Affairs has demonstrated a high level of skill at working with City officials and City Leadership, sensitivity to the legislative and funding needs of the City, the ability to target and successfully address significant issues pending in the state and federal government for City involvement.

In March 2017, the City released separate Requests for Proposals for state and federal lobbying services. The proposals were evaluated and ranked by a selection panel that included outside governmental affairs professionals and City staff. Townsend Public Affairs was ranked highest by the selection panel in both written presentation and in oral interviews during the evaluation of firms submitting a proposal in response to the RFP for State Lobbyist; and submitted a responsive proposal, meeting all the requirements for the RFP for the Federal Lobbyist. Townsend Public Affairs meets the City's Local Business Enterprise/Small Local Business Enterprise (LBE/SLBE) requirement.

In 2017, the City Council approved Resolution No. 86906 C.M.S. Awarding Two Contracts To Townsend Public Affairs To Serve As The City Of Oakland State Lobbyist And To Serve As The City Of Oakland Federal Lobbyist for up to three years, ending September 30, 2020.

Townsend Public Affairs has worked closely with City leadership to secure passage of numerous pieces of Oakland sponsored legislation covering topics such as affordable housing, public safety, environmental protections, support for local government, seismic safety and transportation. In addition, Townsend Public Affairs has worked with City leadership to apply for, secure or protect hundreds of millions dollars in State and Federal funds for public, transportation projects, parks; and affordable housing projects, in addition to recovering essential funds resulting from the dissolution of redevelopment agencies.

### **ANALYSIS AND POLICY ALTERNATIVES**

Townsend has successfully worked in partnership with the Mayor, City Council; and the City Administration to pass important pieces of legislation, secure funding for critical City projects and further the goals of the City. The services to be performed by TPA consist of services requested by the Project Manager or a designated representative, including (but not limited to) the following.

#### **Summary of Scope of Work**

1. Collaborate with City of Oakland to prepare an annual federal and state legislative and advocacy plan.
  2. Prepare necessary paperwork for, advocate for and obtain funding for projects approved by the Mayor.
  3. Advocate for the City of Oakland's policy positions to key State and Federal Legislators, the Governor's Office and state and federal agencies
  4. Analyze legislative language for impact on the City of Oakland:
  5. Advise on support, oppose or amend positions related to pending legislation:
- Finally, every year TPA prepares a report for the City following the end of the respective state legislative session. This report provides a summary of our efforts to date for the legislative advocacy objectives of the City including:

- o City Sponsored State Legislative Proposals
- o State Legislative Priorities for Monitoring and Recommended Action
- o Funding Opportunities and Requests

Given, the current COVID-19 crisis, City staff are focused on emergency response and recovery and the City is relying heavily on our state and federal lobbyists to provide daily updates and assist with advocacy in addressing the COVID-19 crisis; and TPA has been instrumental in keeping the city apprised of quickly changing legislation and executive orders regarding the COVID -19 crisis at the state and federal level; and in implementing an advocacy strategy to secure funding to support the City during this crisis. staff recommend that it is in the best interest of the City to extend the current contracts with Townsend Public Affairs for one year at the current rate.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Funding for these contracts is available from the General Purpose Fund (1010), City-Wide Activities Org (90591), Miscellaneous Contract Services Account (54919); and the Federal Lobbyist Project (1000468) and the State Lobbyist Project (1000467). The cost is \$150,000 for State lobbying services and \$72,000 for Federal Lobbying Services. Funding is included in the FY 20-21 budget.

### **PAST PERFORMANCE, EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP**

As noted above, TPA has served as City's state lobbyist since 2006 and federal lobbyist since 2011. The City has issued RFPs for these services on 3 separate occasions and TPA has been selected each time.

During its tenure, TPA has demonstrated its commitment to the legislative platform and priorities of the City, while serving as an extension of city staff in Sacramento and Washington, D.C. Since it was founded 22 years ago, TPA now has a staff of 13 registered state and federal lobbyists and has risen to rank among the Top Ten Advocacy Firms in California.

During its time as the City's lobbyist, TPA has shepherded dozens of state legislative proposals and amendments into law, including over 36 bills that were sponsored by and specific to the City. **(Please see Attachments A)** These results are a testament to TPA's ability, in conjunction with the City, to continually develop and effectively leverage relationships with the State Legislature, Governor's Administration, and various state agencies, as well as its ability to tailor legislative strategies that are most effective for the City.

In addition to its success in the field of advocacy and legislative strategy, TPA has demonstrated achievement in terms of resource acquisition. The TPA team of grant funding experts has secured over \$299 million in competitive grants from a variety of public, private, and nonprofit sources for City projects including public safety, housing, parks, transportation, education, and cultural resources. **(Please see Attachment B)**. These funds come from both the State and Federal governments.

### **SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES**

**Economic:** The services provided by our state and federal lobbying teams provide opportunities to secure addition funding for economic development, workforce projects; and other projects that bring potential economic benefit to the residents of Oakland.

**Environmental:** The services provided by our state and federal lobbying teams provide opportunities to secure addition funding for parks projects.

**Race & Equity:** The services provided by our state and federal lobbying teams provide opportunities to secure addition funding to address racial equity disparities relating to infrastructure, access to affordable housing and child care; and many other issues.


**ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

Staff Recommends That The City Council approve:

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For questions regarding this report, please contact Elinor Buchen, Deputy Chief of Staff/Legislative Director at (510) 238-7439 or ebuchen@oaklandca.gov

Respectfully submitted,



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Elinor Buchen  
Deputy Chief of Staff/Legislative Director  
Mayor's Office

Attachments (3):      *Attachment A: Summary of State Legislative Achievements*  
                                 *Attachment B: Summary of Funds Awarded*  
                                 *Attachment C: Summary of Federal Legislative Achievements*