



Agenda Item:

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COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

City Manager's Office

GENERAL INFORMATION

Agenda Date: 1/23/06
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Agenda Item Type: Resolution

Roll Call No.:

Submitted by: Richard Clark, Acting City Manager

SUBJECT—

Approving employment of the Ferguson Group to consult and perform services at the Federal level that will facilitate transportation, economic development, community revitalization, homeland security and related projects in the City of Des Moines.

SYNOPSIS—

Council is requested to continue to retain the Ferguson Group, a Washington, DC lobbying firm, to assist in securing Federal funds, provide governmental affairs services and strategic advice, and build key relationships with Federal decision-makers to facilitate community revitalization and related projects throughout Des Moines. Community revitalization projects include redevelopment of Riverpoint West, the Agrimergent Technology Park and the Principal Riverwalk. Related projects include the SE Connector, I-235, trails, storm sewers, Geographical Information Systems (GIS), emergency service interoperability and other homeland security work. The Ferguson Group's specialized expertise will be used primarily to assist the City in accessing extensive capital and technical resources to effect successful projects.

FISCAL IMPACT—

Professional services are estimated not to exceed \$30,000 (\$5,000/month), plus less approximately than \$5,000 for expenses for a six-month contract period of January 1, 2006 through June 30, 2006. Funding is being provided from carryover from the Benchmarking and Training Fund. (SP720 HRS 980100).

RECOMMENDATION—

Approval.

BACKGROUND—

The City has worked successfully with Ferguson Group. In 2005, the firm assisted the City in securing nearly \$35 million for highway and related projects in the Transportation Reauthorization Bill as well as

\$7 million in appropriations funding for transportation, storm sewer, the Principal Riverwalk and redevelopment.

Funding opportunities await the City for a variety of projects that will assist in enabling economic development, improving transportation and other infrastructure, supporting homeland security and advancing the community's quality of life. By continuing to work with the Ferguson Group, the City

will enhance its ability to attract the capital and technical assistance needed. Local resources can be used more effectively to leverage additional investment.

The professional services to be provided by the Ferguson Group in 2006 include the following:

- Identifying sources and assisting in defining priorities for Federal assistance. The firm will continue to identify specific Federal agency grant and Congressional appropriations opportunities to support the City's high priority projects.
- Developing and implementing a strategy to obtain Congressional appropriations during FY2007. The strategy will involve identifying Congressional funding opportunities, scheduling meetings and preparing fact sheets for Council to support the City's funding requests, drafting appropriations request letters, working closely with Des Moines' Congressional offices, facilitating meetings, following up with key decision makers and tracking Congressional funding outcomes.
- Developing and implementing a strategy to secure funding in the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) reauthorization bill. The firm will continue to seek authorization in the WRDA bill or in the FY2007 Energy and Water Appropriations Bill for construction related to the Des Moines and Raccoon Rivers Flood Prevention Project.
- Supporting funding applications to Federal agencies. As needed, the firm will identify grant opportunities, review applications as necessary and help the City to secure the support of senior administration and key Congressional officials for funding.
- Monitoring national legislation of interest to the City and provide timely updates, especially related to new brownfields, homeland security and water and sewer infrastructure funding proposals.
- Providing Federal regulatory and legal assistance as needed to ensure successful project implementation.
- Providing regular updates of government affairs activities. The firm will send regular written updates describing the status of the City's various Federally-related priorities to the City Manager.

The firm has specialized expertise and has developed extensive relationships with Federal agencies. Its knowledge of Federal officials and programs will be very beneficial in advancing the City's community revitalization goals.

City staff will lead the effort to pursue Federal funding opportunities and to develop new strategic alliances. The Ferguson Group will provide the support needed to enhance the City's capabilities in leveraging resources.