



Council Communication

Office of the City Manager

Date

April 20, 2009

Agenda Item No. **63**

Roll Call No. **09-**

Communication No. **09-222**

Submitted by: **Richard A. Clark, City Manager**

AGENDA HEADING:

Approving contract with Holland & Knight, LLP (Richard Gold, Partner, 2099 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006) to provide federal government relations services that will facilitate federal funding for transportation, economic development, community revitalization, public safety, homeland security and related projects in the City of Des Moines.

SYNOPSIS:

Council is requested to approve retention of Holland & Knight (H&K), a Washington, D.C. lobbying firm, to assist in securing federal funds, provide governmental affairs services and strategic advice to address federal policy issues and build key relationships with federal agencies and decision-makers in order to facilitate American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Stimulus) funding, as well as community revitalization and other projects funded through federal appropriations. Community revitalization projects include street and bridge construction and repair, levee construction, public transportation initiatives, and redevelopment of Riverpoint West and the Principal Riverwalk. Potential projects also include the next phase of the SE Connector, Grand Avenue bridge repair, storm and sanitary sewers, Geographical Information Systems (GIS), emergency service interoperability, other homeland security work and construction and improvements to municipal buildings, including energy improvements. H&K's specialized expertise will be used primarily to assist the City in accessing extensive capital and technical resources to affect successful projects. The City's contract manager and point of contact for this service will be Assistant City Manager, Chris Johansen.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Amount: \$90,000 annually, plus travel expenses

Funding Sources: FY2009 Operating Budget:

\$15,000 - Storm Water Utility Enterprise Fund – EN301 PWK077001, page 301

\$15,000 - Sanitary Sewer Operations Fund – EN101 PWK074004, page 292

\$3,000 - Solid Waste Operations Fund – EN151 PWK100101, page 296

\$57,000 - Economic Development Enterprise – SP743 CMO980717, page 90

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

During the past six years, the City of Des Moines has established an excellent relationship with its congressional offices. Through this partnership, the City has received approximately \$80 million in federal funding for its priority projects, such as the SE Connector and Principal Riverwalk, as well as sewer and levee projects. City staff has identified priority projects, developed detailed project fact sheets, met with congressional staff to prepare them for the official visits between City Council members and the elected representatives, attended meetings, written appropriations request letters and completed federal funding forms. The City believes that having a presence in Washington, D.C. is important in order to support its appropriations efforts.

Additionally, with the advent of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, there are many funding opportunities that have become or will become available to cities such as Des Moines. Some of that funding is distributed via already established formulas and many of those eligible projects have already been approved by Council. However, there are also additional competitive grants and allocations that require a comprehensive understanding of the federal agencies involved, with a very short response time. In addition to appropriations and stimulus funding, a federal government relations firm can assist the City with reauthorization and regulatory concerns.

With this in mind, a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Federal Government Relations services was issued to 23 firms on March 3, 2009. Nine proposals were received by the City of Des Moines' Procurement Division and were reviewed by the Evaluation and Selection Committee using the following Selection Criteria:

- Business Organization
- Technical Approach
- Project Team
- Experience
- Cost

Based on the above criteria, the Evaluation and Selection Committee recommends contracting the services of Holland & Knight LLP.

The deliverables provided by H&K would include:

- *Federal Relations Strategy*: Assist the City in development of an overall federal relations strategy and provide support for this strategy including: meeting with Council members and City staff; identifying congressional funding opportunities; assisting during City Council and staff's Washington visits; following up with key decision makers; and tracking Congressional funding outcomes.
- *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Support*: Provide the City with up-to-date information on stimulus funding opportunities via twice a week updates and guidance during this very competitive funding environment.
- *Weekly Grant Notification*: Provide information on recently announced federal grant opportunities.
- *Drafting Legislation*: Complete support in drafting entire bills or limited provisions for pending legislation.
- *Drafting Testimony*: Preparation of testimony for presentation before Congressional committees.

- *Political Intelligence:* Maintain strong bi-partisan relationships with both the congressional delegation and federal agencies to allow for quick assessment of issues as they arise. Monitor national legislation of interest to the City.
- *Forms and Applications:* Provide the City with support of funding applications to federal agencies. As needed, the firm will review applications and help the City to secure the support of senior administration and key Congressional officials for funding.
- *Washington Visits:* Assist with scheduling and agendas to ensure that the City's visits to Washington, D.C. are effective and efficient.
- *Regular Updates:* Provide regular updates of all government affairs activities. The firm will provide regular 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. H&K's knowledge of federal officials and programs will be very beneficial in advancing the City's goals. While City staff will continue to lead the effort to pursue federal funding opportunities, H&K will provide the support needed to enhance the City's capabilities in leveraging resources.

A one year contract with an option to renew in one year increments for three additional years has been negotiated. The first and second years are priced at \$7,500/mo. and the third and fourth years are priced at \$8,000/mo. H&K's fees include all expenses except travel.

The City will conduct an annual evaluation of the consultant's performance prior to renewal. The contract is also terminable at will, so that if the City is dissatisfied for any reason with the services provided, the contract can be terminated immediately.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S): NONE

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S): NONE

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS: NONE

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