

## City Council – Action Request Form

**Date:** August 8, 2022

**To:** Mayor, Mayor Pro Tempore, and Members of the City Council

**From:** Aaron King, Assistant City Manager

**Council Action Requested:**

Resolution Authorizing the City Manager to Enter into an Agreement with Strategics Consulting for Grant Writing Services

**Strategic Focus Area:** Service Excellence

**Strategic Objective:** No

**Strategic Plan Action Item:** No

**Key Work Item:** No



**Summary of Information:**

In November 2021, the U.S. Congress passed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). This law provides for formulaic and competitive grants for a variety of infrastructure maintenance and development categories over the next five years. To put the City in the best possible position in competing for grant funding, the attached resolution authorizes the City Manager to contract with Strategics Consulting to manage grant-writing services. Strategics would identify competent, issue-oriented grant writers for specific grant opportunities as identified and prioritized by City staff.

On June 10, 2022, the U.S. Department of Transportation issued a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the 2022 Bridge Investment Program (BIP), which provides funding for bridge planning/design and construction projects. Strategics Consulting identified DH Leonard Consulting and Grant Writing Services (a WBE firm) as an organization with significant experience in Federal grant writing and specific experience with transportation infrastructure projects. For a fee of \$15,000, Strategics will manage the grant-writing process and subcontract with the aforementioned firm for a bridge planning/design grant.

**Committee Action:**

<b>Committee</b>	Finance 8/8/22	<b>Action</b>	Approval
<b>For</b>	Unanimous	<b>Against</b>	

**Remarks:**

## Grant Application Selection

Staff recommends the contracted grant writing approach both to enlist specialized support for competitive grants processes and to augment City staff resources due to higher-than-normal levels of vacancy in many departments. To be effective and efficient in the use of tax dollars, staff intends to identify only the highest priority projects for grant applications using the following criteria:

1. Projects must be identified infrastructure maintenance needs
2. Projects must already be planned and in a priority funding category

A staff committee is reviewing current unfunded capital needs and will be assigning priority status to projects based on the criteria above so that projects can be matched with available grant opportunities as they are announced.

For the current BIP grant opportunity, staff has worked with the grant writer and prioritized the bridge on Old Greensboro Road for a planning grant. This bridge received a critical finding in the most recent bridge inspection report. The bridge also falls within a qualified census tract, which should improve scoring for the application.

## Funding Grant-Writing Services

The attached Annual Appropriation and Tax Levy Ordinance amendment appropriates \$100,000 from general fund balance for grant-writing services. A contract with Strategics Consulting will be executed for an amount not-to-exceed \$100,000. That funding will be used until exhausted for future grant opportunities. A report will be generated to the Mayor and City Council showing the cost of each grant application and amount of funding secured.