



CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT



October 8, 2024

ITEM TITLE

Agreement: Approve Legal Service Agreement with Christensen & Spath, LLC to Provide Housing-Related Legal Services

Report Number: 24-0270

Location: No specific geographic location

Department: Housing and Homeless Services; City Attorney

G.C. § 84308: Yes

Environmental Notice: The activity is not a “Project” as defined under Section 15378 of the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) State Guidelines; therefore, pursuant to State Guidelines Section 15060(c)(3) no environmental review is required.

Recommended Action

Adopt a resolution approving a Legal Services Agreement with Christensen & Spath, LLC for housing-related legal services.

SUMMARY

This agreement will allow the City to continue to use the law firm of Christensen & Spath, LLP for housing-related, specialized legal services for three years, with an option to extend for two additional years.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The Director of Development Services has reviewed the proposed activity for compliance with CEQA and has determined that the activity is not a “Project” as defined under Section 15378 of the State CEQA Guidelines because it will not result in a physical change in the environment; therefore, pursuant to Section 15060(c)(3) of the State CEQA Guidelines, the activity is not subject to CEQA. Thus, no environmental review is required.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Not applicable.

DISCUSSION

The City's Housing and Homeless Services department has been and will continue to grow in the coming years as the need for housing, particularly affordable housing, in our community persists. Concurrent with that growth is an increase in the need for housing-related legal services, often of a specialized nature.

The law firm of Christensen & Spath, LLP has provided responsive, high quality legal assistance in the specialized area of affordable housing for many years. Given the volume of legal work and the temporarily reduced level of staffing in the City Attorney's Office, staff is recommending that City enter into an agreement with Christensen & Spath, LLP for on call legal services related to affordable housing. The proposed agreement would be for an initial three-year term, with two one-year options to extend, for a total potential agreement term of five years. The not to exceed amount of the agreement is \$100,000 per year and costs would be reimbursed on an as-used basis. There is no requirement that City use the entire not to exceed amount.

DECISION-MAKER CONFLICT

Staff has reviewed the decision contemplated by this action and has determined that it is not site-specific and consequently, the real property holdings of the City Council members do not create a disqualifying real property-related financial conflict of interest under the Political Reform Act (Cal. Gov't Code § 87100, et seq.). Staff is not independently aware and has not been informed by any City Council member, of any other fact that may constitute a basis for a decision-maker conflict of interest in this matter.

CURRENT-YEAR FISCAL IMPACT

There is no additional fiscal impact as a result of this action. Funding is available based on current year budget appropriations.

ONGOING FISCAL IMPACT

The annual cost for this contract will be considered as part of the annual budget development process.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Legal Services Agreement with Christensen & Spath, LLP

*Staff Contact: Stacey Kurz, Director of Housing & Homeless Services
Megan McClurg, Assistant City Attorney*