



## Legislation Details (With Text)

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**On agenda:** 4/18/2024      **Final action:** 4/18/2024

**Title:** Approve the First Amendment to a Consultant Services Agreement with Covino Smith & Simon (formerly known as Simon and Company, Inc.), to extend the Agreement to April 20, 2025, and increase the contract value by \$5,200.04 to \$70,200 per year for Professional Lobbying and Consulting Services in Washington DC.

**Sponsors:** Office of Mayor & City Manager

**Indexes:**

**Code sections:**

**Attachments:** 1. 24-484 First Amendment with original Consultant Services Agreement

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
4/18/2024	1	City Council	ADOPTED	Pass

## REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** GEORGEANNE A. WHITE, City Manager  
Office of the Mayor & City Manager

**BY:** JOHN ELLIS, Government Affairs Manager  
Office of the Mayor & City Manager

## SUBJECT

Approve the First Amendment to a Consultant Services Agreement with Covino Smith & Simon (formerly known as Simon and Company, Inc.), to extend the Agreement to April 20, 2025, and increase the contract value by \$5,200.04 to \$70,200 per year for Professional Lobbying and Consulting Services in Washington DC.

## RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council approve the First Amendment to the Consultant Services Agreement with Covino Smith & Simon for an annual rate of \$70,200.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On May 12, 2022, the City Council approved a Consultant Services Agreement with the term of two years, with the option of two, one-year extensions. The Office of the Mayor and City Manager seeks City Council approval for the First Amendment to a Consultant Services Agreement with Covino Smith & Simon to continue performing professional lobbying and legislative services regarding

federal government activities in Washington DC for one year, with the option of one additional one-year extension on the agreement of both parties. The annual rate is \$70,200, which includes a fee increase of \$5,200.04 from the previous annual rate of \$64,999.92 which has not been increased since 2017.

## **BACKGROUND**

Since beginning operations in 1987, Covino Smith & Simon has developed a successful track record helping local governments take advantage of opportunities and solve problems within the federal legislative and executive branches. The City's relationship with Covino Smith & Simon dates to the 1990s and has proven beneficial, as the firm has grown to understand the many local needs and challenges - an understanding that only comes with a longstanding working relationship. This became especially clear when the world faced the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic. Covino Smith & Simon proved particularly adept at keeping City officials abreast of fast-moving federal government developments, as well as ensuring the City had a voice in DC as lawmakers approved two major funding programs to help deal with the pandemic. Fresno benefitted financially from both programs thanks in part to Covino Smith & Simon legwork. The company's work continues now as it is ensuring the City is properly positioned to take advantage of the approved Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and has been instrumental in navigating the complexities associated with several airport projects.

Covino Smith & Simon has represented the City at the national level in Washington DC for close to three decades, providing assistance in legislative affairs, intergovernmental relations, federal grants and program development, and special projects. During its time representing the City, Covino Smith & Simon has successfully assisted in securing more than \$60 million in federal appropriations.

Having a federal lobbyist has allowed the City to:

- Compete for scarce resources;
- Have access to the President and his Cabinet, as well as Congressional leaders and their staffs, federal agencies, and other important decision makers;
- Stay abreast of and influence federal agencies;
- Monitor important legislative initiatives, be they positive and negative;
- Receive important notices about grant opportunities, as well as assistance and advice on how best to present the grant applications; and
- Receive instruction about how to mobilize City resources.

In short, Covino Smith & Simon monitors all significant actions of the federal establishment that could make a difference to Fresno. Over the years, Covino Smith & Simon's return on investment is proven. The firm is proactive, responsive and attuned to the City's needs. Covino Smith & Simon also sends a weekly update of relevant Washington DC news, including the Capitol, White House and federal agencies, sends out special reports as needed, and regularly provides notice of grant and funding opportunities to the City's Government Affairs Manager. In addition, they provide logistical support when the Mayor, members of the Council, and Department Directors travel to Washington DC, and are able to open doors to critical federal and legislative offices for these visits. The contract would be effective upon execution by both parties.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL FINDINGS**

Approval of the consultant service agreement amendment is not a “project” within the meaning of Public Resources Code Section 21065 (CEQA Guidelines Section 15378) because the organizational and administrative activities as identified in the consultant agreement will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment.

## **LOCAL PREFERENCE**

Local preference was not used because this is an Amendment to an existing Agreement.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

The Fiscal Year 2024 Budget approved by Council includes sufficient General Fund appropriations. Appropriations for FY 25 will be included through the annual budget process.

Attachment:

First Amendment with original Consultant Services Agreement