



**AGENDA REPORT**

<b>PROPOSED ACTION:</b> Approve and Authorize the Executive Director to Execute a Professional Services Agreement for Federal Advocacy Services with Van Scoyoc Associates Incorporated for a Three-Year Term, with Two, One-Year Extension Options, for a Maximum Compensation Not to Exceed \$762,500. <b>(Public Engagement)</b>	
<u>Submitted By:</u> Matt Davis, Chief Public Engagement Officer; Danny Wan, Executive Director	
<u>Parties Involved:</u> Van Scoyoc Associates 800 Maine Ave. SW, Suite 800, Washington, DC 20024  H. Stewart Van Scoyoc, Founder/CEO Steven Palmer, Vice President	<u>Amount:</u> Total amount not to exceed \$762,500 over five years  (Operating Expense)
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:</b> In March 2024, the Port of Oakland (Port) issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) for federal consulting and advocacy services in support of federal Port priorities. The services are critical as many Port activities and operations are affected by actions taken at the federal level. Based on the proposals received and evaluated, Port Staff determined Van Scoyoc Associates, Inc. (VSA) was the top ranked firm in part because of the skill of their staff and their expertise in both the aviation and maritime sectors.	

**BACKGROUND & ANALYSIS**

The Port of Oakland’s activities and operations are highly impacted by actions undertaken at the federal level. In recent years the Port has utilized contract lobbying firms based in Washington, D.C. to provide strategic consulting advice and federal advocacy services to complement and reinforce the in-house efforts of Port Staff and leadership. The Port utilizes these consultant services to assist in obtaining funding for critical Seaport and Airport projects and to support advocacy efforts related to issues and regulations that might affect the Port.

In addition to annual funding and authorizing bills that must be passed by Congress to maintain basic federal functions that affect the Port, additional critical policy initiatives that merit the Port’s direct advocacy and focus include:

- **Transportation Infrastructure:** Support efforts for comprehensive surface transportation legislation that includes funding opportunities for goods movement initiatives, including port authorities.

- **Airport Operations and Funding:** Advance efforts to secure long-term airport funding enhancements such as an increase in the Passenger Facility Charge and the Airport Improvement Program, in addition to support for essential airport-related Department of Homeland Security functions provided by the Transportation Security Administration and Customs and Border Protection, among others.
- **Water Resources:** Continued support for annual operations and maintenance dredging funding and policy implementation that impact the Oakland Harbor, in addition to coordination with all levels of U.S. Army Corps leadership on the Port's annual dredging program and the proposed Turning Basins Widening Project; Ensure that Port needs are addressed, as needed, in bi-annual water resources legislation currently being developed.
- **Energy & Environment:** Engage policymakers and support environmental and energy-related initiatives such as the Diesel Emissions Reductions Act, and advocate for Port grant submissions to the EPA Clean Ports Program, Port Infrastructure Development Program, and other energy sustainability and/or climate adaptation programs.

Given the relevance of these policy areas to Port operations, the continued use of outside lobbying expertise to help complement and support the existing federal relationships of Port officials and leadership is warranted.

The Port has been represented since 2019 in Washington, DC by VSA, a government relations firm that has operated in the nation's capital for over 30 years, under a current Board of Port Commissioners approved agreement that expires in October 2024. In advance of this Port Staff issued a formal RFP in March 2024, RFP No. 23-24/20 to solicit proposals from qualified lobbyists and/or lobbying firms to represent the Port's interests in Washington, DC. Proposals were due on April 25, 2024. The RFP was disseminated in several ways, including:

- Distributed by email to local Chambers of Commerce, Community Based Organizations, and relevant Port-certified Local/Small firms in the Port's certified database.
- Posted on the Port website
- Advertised in the legal section of the Oakland Tribune
- Shared with national trade organizations representing aviation and maritime interests.
- Emailed directly by the Port's Purchasing Department to over two dozen federal lobbying firms with demonstrated subject matter expertise in the aviation and/or maritime sectors.

The RFP criteria are outlined in Table 1.

**Table 1**  
**RFP Evaluation Criteria**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Weight</b>
1	Adherence to Port Policy and Other Requirements, and Debarment Statement	Pass/Fail
2	Company Information, Client References, Litigation Check and Capacity to Provide Professional Services as Requested	Pass/Fail
3	Knowledge and Experience:  Demonstration of bi-partisan federal relationships and experience in both the Executive and Legislative branches in Washington, DC; Focused expertise in both the aviation and maritime sectors; Familiarity with the California congressional delegation Members and professional Capitol staff, as well as those of key committees with jurisdiction impacting overall Port operations	35%
4	Plan and Approach:  Comprehensive understanding of policy and political issues impacting aviation and maritime sectors, including outlook on future opportunities and threats; Familiarity and experience in working with national trade/interest advocacy associations in both sectors, including Port tenants and customers; Quality and timeliness of client communications and updates on legislative and regulatory matters	40%
5	Proposed Costs	10%
6	Non-Discrimination and Small Local Business Utilization Policy: Qualifying companies may receive an award of up to a maximum 15 points based on substantiating documentation	Up to 15%
<b>Total</b>		Up to 100%

The Port received two responses from qualified firms in response to the RFP. An Evaluation Committee of Port Staff (Committee) reviewed the written responses, and both firms were invited to make presentations to the Committee and participate in formal interviews, which were conducted online on June 12, 2024.

The evaluation resulted in the following ranking of the two proposals received:

**Table 2**  
**Ranking of RFP Submissions**

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Firm</b>	<b>Location</b>
1	Van Scoyoc Associates	Washington, DC
2	Porter Wright Morris & Arthur	Washington, DC

The review and analysis of the written proposals and the subsequent presentations made by the firms, including questions and answers with the Committee members, confirmed that the top-two ranked firms both presented credible and capable lobbying teams with realistic and reasonable approaches to representing the Port and advocating for its interests in Washington, DC.

Based on the overall analysis and interviews, the Committee unanimously determined that the unique skill sets and backgrounds of the VSA team, in addition to their ability to provide a range of high-level expertise covering both the aviation and maritime sectors, provided the best opportunity for success for the Port's federal advocacy efforts. Biographies of the VSA Project Manager and Key Personnel assigned to represent the Port can be reviewed in **Attachment A**.

**OTHER FINDINGS AND PROVISIONS**

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

The proposed action was analyzed under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and was found to be:

- Categorically exempt under the following CEQA Guidelines Section:  
Choose an item.
- Not a "Project" under CEQA, as defined in Public Resources Code § 21065.
- "Common Sense" exemption under CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3).
- Other/Notes:

**BUDGET**

- Administrative (No Impact to Operating, Non-Operating, or Capital Budgets); OR  
 Operating                       Non-Operating                       Capital

Analysis: Total Amount Not to Exceed \$762,500 (\$12,500 per month, plus \$2,500 per year in incidental and pre-approved expenses) over a total potential contract term of five years.

**STAFFING**

- No Anticipated Staffing Impact.
- Anticipated Change to Budgeted Headcount.  
Reason:
- Other Anticipated Staffing Impact (e.g., Temp Help).  
Reason:

**MARITIME AND AVIATION PROJECT LABOR AGREEMENT (MAPLA):**

Applies? No (Not Aviation or Maritime CIP Project) – proposed action is not covered work on Port's Capital Improvement Program in Aviation or Maritime areas above the threshold cost.

- Additional Notes:

**LIVING WAGE** (City Charter § 728):

Applies?

No (Not Covered Entity) – proposed action involves entity not covered by Living Wage requirements because it is not a covered service provider or tenant, does not employ at least 21 employees, or receive from or pay to Port at least \$50,000.

- Additional Notes:

**SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES:**

Applies? **No.**

**GENERAL PLAN** (City Charter § 727):

Conformity Determination:

<p><u>Reason:</u> Although this action does not involve a development project, purchasing of equipment, or operations that by and of themselves present sustainable opportunities, the efforts of federal advocacy and consulting individuals and firms that the Port may contract with can promote policies and opportunities that may result in federal funding, regulatory amendments, and/or favorable policy outcomes that can assist with Port sustainability goals.</p>	<p>No Project – conformity determination not required because proposed action does not change use of or make alterations to an existing facility, or create a new facility.</p>
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**STRATEGIC PLAN.** The proposed action would help the Port achieve the following goal(s) and objective(s) in the Port’s Strategic Business Plan:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grow Net Revenues	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Modernize and Maintain Infrastructure
<input type="checkbox"/> Improve Customer Service	<input type="checkbox"/> Pursue Employee Excellence
<input type="checkbox"/> Strengthen Safety and Security	<input type="checkbox"/> Serve Our Community
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Care for Our Environment	