

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY
COUNTY EXECUTIVE OFFICE
INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS & LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

105 E. ANAPAMU STREET, ROOM 406
SANTA BARBARA, CA 93101

**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS
FEDERAL ADVOCACY/LOBBYING SERVICES**

ISSUE DATE: NOVEMBER 29, 2006

**RESPONSE DEADLINE: WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2006 BY
NOON PST**

SELECTION DATE: DECEMBER 19, 2006

CONTRACT DATE: DECEMBER 23, 2006

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INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW OF THE COUNTY

The County of Santa Barbara is located approximately 100 miles northwest of Los Angeles and 300 miles south of San Francisco. It occupies 2,774 square miles, of which one-third is located within the Los Padres national Forest and of which 110 miles are part of the Pacific coastline. The population is 421,625, which includes the cities of Buellton, Carpinteria, Guadalupe, Lompoc, Santa Barbara, Santa Maria and Solvang and the unincorporated area of the County and its distinct communities of Casmalia, Cuyama, Goleta Valley, Gaviota, Isla Vista, Los Olivos, Montecito, Orcutt, Santa Ynez Valley, Summerland and Vandenberg Village. The economic base of the County primarily focuses on agriculture, tourism and the public sector with Vandenberg Air Force Base and the University of California Santa Barbara being some of the largest employers.

The County government includes a five-member Board of Supervisors, the County Executive Office, 19 departments and the Superior Court. The departments are primarily responsible for providing mandated services of health and public assistance, public safety and law and justice. The Fiscal Year 2006-2007 recommended budget is \$713 million with 35% of the County's total revenues coming from the federal and state government.

A strategic scan was conducted in late 2005 that identified several critical issues facing the County, namely: financial stability, sustainable agriculture, environmental/open space preservation, efficient transportation system, housing, service delivery (a well educated/trained workforce), health care and social service delivery and accommodating demographic changes. A resident survey was conducted in early 2006 that revealed that the biggest challenges facing the County are transportation, affordable housing, traffic issues (in particular the widening of Highway 101) and jobs/economic growth.

STATEMENT OF NEED AND INTENT

The County of Santa Barbara seeks responses from firms with experience in advocacy/lobbying at the federal level to assist the County in developing and pursuing its legislative platform. The County's Board of Supervisors has recently endorsed the issues and projects that will comprise its 2007 federal legislative platform. It now seeks outside expertise in developing appropriate strategies and advocating for the County's priorities in Washington, DC. Primarily, the County seeks assistance in identifying appropriate funding for several key projects as well as ensuring the continued funding for programs related to health, public assistance and public safety. It also requests assistance in monitoring legislation that would impact the Count, especially as it pertains to its critical issues. The selected firm(s) will work with the Board of Supervisors, the County Executive Office, various departments, and the County's State lobbyist as needed. Usually

one to two Board members embark on trips to Washington, DC in the early spring and the firm(s) selected will help craft the itinerary for the Board member(s).

Given the broad nature of the County's platform, the County will consider using the services of multiple firms for selected areas depending on the quality of responses it receives to this RFQ. The initial contract with the selected firm(s) will be for a period of two years, December 2006 to December 2008, with the possibility of additional one year extensions, subject to Board approval and budgetary authority.

2007 FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

NEW FEDERAL FUNDING/APPROPRIATION

- LAKE CACHUMA
- SANTA MARIA LEVEE
- MISSION CREEK
- VETERANS BUILDING
- EOC EQUIPMENT- DISPATCH
- BEACH EROSION
- TRANSPORTATION

CONTINUED FUNDING/INCREASE REIMBURSEMENT RATES

- MEDICAL REIMBURSEMENT RATES
- BIOTERRORISM
- SCAAP
- SAFER

LEGISLATIVE SUPPORT

- CHILD SUPPORT

LEGISLATIVE MONITORING

- TRIBAL LAND USE ISSUES

Lake Cachuma: The Federal Bureau of Reclamation ("Bureau") constructed Bradbury Dam in the 1950s. The County provides an array of recreational amenities to approximately 700,000 visitors year-round at Lake Cachuma. As a result of a biological opinion issued by the National Marine Fisheries Service, the Bureau has declared the need for an increase in the lake level to capture, retain and subsequently release additional water for the protection of habitat for the endangered steelhead. The surcharge will impact various facilities and improvements at the Park costing roughly \$12 million. The County continues to seek federal appropriations to offset the cost of the impacts to the facilities (roughly request \$2 million a year). The County secured \$1.18 million in federal funds in 2006.

Santa Maria Levee: The 26 mile levee, built by the Army Corps of Engineers ("Corps") in the 1960s and constructed as a compacted sand berm with a rock

face to protect the sand from the scouring effects of water flows during a storm, has breached in 1998. Recently, FEMA requested the Corps to certify that the levee would provide protection from a 100 year flood. The Corps would not. Since the levee protects the growing residential population (currently 100,000) located within Santa Maria and vital agricultural lands, the County is seeking federal appropriations for the levee. The estimated cost for total replacement would be \$20 million, so the federal lobbyist will work with County staff to define various phases of the project and seek appropriate funding.

Mission Creek: Mission Creek drainage is about 11.5 square miles that extends from the Santa Ynez Mountains to the Pacific Ocean and flows for eight miles through the City of Santa Barbara. It serves to protect residential, commercial and public properties located in Santa Barbara from flooding. Portions of Mission Creek have been known to include the threatened tidewater goby and the endangered steelhead. The estimated cost to construct a flood control channel would be \$30 million, so the federal lobbyist will work with County staff to define various phases of the project and seek appropriate funding.

Veterans' Building: The Veteran's Building, located in Lompoc, was constructed in the mid 1930s and is in need of restoration including plumbing, electrical and correcting damage from termites and dry rot. Total restoration is likely to cost \$3 million. However, the County, which has contributed \$100,000 toward immediate repair, is seeking federal funding in the amount of \$200,000-400,000 for immediate repairs so that the building can safely be used by community groups.

EOC Equipment-Dispatch: Given the County's geographical location, proximity to Los Angeles and Vandenberg Air Force Base and its proclivity toward natural disasters related to fires, earthquakes and floods, the County is preparing to build a new Emergency Operations Center ("EOC") in the middle of the county in Santa Ynez to replace the outdated modular that is the current EOC. It is funding the construction of the EOC with local revenues. One primary purpose of the new EOC will be to house a backup or redundant dispatch center. Currently, the County Sheriff, located in Santa Barbara, serves as the public safety answering point and dispatches emergency calls for the Sheriff and for several fire agencies. If the Sheriff's dispatch center should suffer from a natural or man-made disaster, the County's front-line responders would not be able to respond because there would not be an alternative dispatch center. The County is seeking one-time funding of approximately \$700,000 to purchase the dispatching software necessary to have a separate backup dispatch system located within the EOC.

Beach Erosion: With over 110 miles of coastline, beach erosion is an issue facing the County. In particular, Goleta Beach, which is a County park, has repeatedly experienced severe beach erosion and sand depletion during major storms. The County is seeking federal funding for beach erosion projects.

Transportation: The County has utilized funding from the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century for surface treatment projects, concrete curb, gutter and sidewalk repairs, bridge repair and replacement and various road widening and improvement projects. The County is seeking federal funding for various transportation-related projects.

Medical Reimbursement Rates: The County's Public Health Department, by virtue of a Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA) Healthcare for the Homeless grant, has the status of a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) which allows the department a fixed rate per visit that was originally meant to reimburse an FQHC provider at their costs. The payment rate, however, has a cap and also requires a 20% co-pay by Medicare eligible patients. Unfortunately, the cap only grows by the Medicare Economic Index (MEI), which historically has grown at a rate far below that of the costs of the healthcare system. The County is seeking continued federal funding of Health Centers program and, more specifically, Healthcare for the Homeless grantees as well as funding a study to review and "rebase" the capped rate for Medicare FQHC payment to more appropriately cover the escalating costs of providing healthcare services.

Bioterrorism Funding: The County's Public Health Department (PHD) currently receives funding from: 1) the Centers for Disease Control (CDC); 2) the Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA); and 3) the State of California Department of Health Services (DHS) for a variety of purposes related to public health preparedness and response to pandemics and other types of disasters. PHD has received funding for this purpose since Fiscal Year 2001-02 and has had to meet a variety of state and federal benchmarks within prescribed focus areas; such as public health laboratory testing, disease surveillance, pharmaceutical stockpiles, and risk communication. This has required that the PHD add staff, upgrade facilities, and purchase equipment and supplies that need maintenance and are subject to cost increases. However, this enhanced level of readiness cannot be maintained without a minimum amount of funding that will allow for some nominal staffing levels and the maintenance of the equipment and systems that have been put in place. Unfortunately, the funding from the CDC has already decreased over the past few years and the reductions are expected to continue at a rate of approximately 15% per year. The County is seeking support for the following items: Support ongoing funding at a maintenance level to the PHD and other health departments to insure infrastructure is in place that allows that plans for response and training are fully developed, and that necessary equipment and supplies are purchased; Conduct assessment of local Public Health Departments to determine the optimal level of base funding required for ongoing maintenance of disaster emergency preparedness activities; Provide financial incentives for regional collaboration; and Establish a process to gradually decrease funding to a "maintenance base level" as identified through a local assessment.

SCAAP Reimbursement Rates: The State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP) reimbursed counties for the costs of housing undocumented aliens

within county jails. The County's Sheriff Department estimated an average daily population of 119 inmates for calendar year 2005 based on ICE holds (interviews for three days a week). The Department calculates undocumented aliens cost it \$3.3 Million, of which it received \$308,000 in reimbursement in fiscal year 2005-2006. The percentage of reimbursement was higher in previous years. The County is seeking continued federal funding of this program including increasing the reimbursement rate for counties.

SAFER Funding: Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response program provides grants to fire agencies to fund a portion of a firefighter's salary for five years (up to \$100,000) as an effort to increase 24 hour front-line firefighting coverage. While the County's Fire Department has not received this type of grant, it is eager to continue to apply for this grant. The County is seeking continued federal funding of this program and exploring the possibility of increasing the cap amount awarded for firefighter salaries.

Child Support: Child Support activities in Santa Barbara are funded by the State and Federal government through a 2/3 (Fed) and 1/3 (State) match. Currently, California receives Child Support performance incentive funds from Washington that can be used as State match to draw down additional Federal dollars for this program. Section 7309 of the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005, scheduled to go into effect October 1, 2007, changes the way these incentive funds are characterized so that they can no longer be used as match to draw down Federal funds. Section 7309 will cost the California Child Support program \$90 million annually. Santa Barbara County's share will be about \$900 thousand annually, or almost 10 percent of the Child Support Services department's budget. The County is seeking support by federal legislators for H.R. 4794 to repeal Section 7309 and pass HR 4739 into law known as the Child Support Protection Act of 2006.

Tribal Issues: The County has one recognized tribe within its boundary that operates a casino. The County supports legislation that requires an enforceable agreement with local government before tribal land is taken into trust. The County's policy is to oppose fee to trust applications that unnecessarily result in loss of local land use control and to encourage government to government agreements that are mutually acceptable, legally enforceable, and fully mitigate environmental and fiscal impacts. The County seeks a federal advocate/lobbyist to keep abreast of potential decisions made by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and to advocate the County's position in Washington, DC.

SCOPE OF WORK

The scope of work is a general guide to the work the County expects to be performed by the federal lobbyist(s), and is not a complete listing of all services that may be required or desired. (Specific performance measures will be developed once contract is negotiated).

1. Advise County of the political and financial feasibility of the legislative platform and develop appropriate strategies in consultation with County staff.
2. Advise on presentation (organization, formatting, etc.) of legislative materials.
3. Assist in drafting materials and correspondence to support advocacy for legislative platform.
4. Research funding requests and provide County with appropriations bill, department, and account information for the legislative platform.
5. Monitor pending legislation pertaining to legislative platform and keep County staff apprised of legislation.
6. Represent the County in Washington, DC in terms of communicating the County's legislative platform to the appropriate elected representatives, key Committee members, federal agencies and other actors as needed.
7. Participate in the crafting of itineraries and facilitating meetings with Washington, DC delegation for County's Board of Supervisors and other staff as needed. It is anticipated that least two Board members will travel to Washington, DC in February 2007.
8. Travel to Santa Barbara County as needed, with a minimum of one visit a year. Participation via teleconference with members of the County's Legislative Program Committee at least quarterly.

RESPONSE SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

TIME AND PLACE FOR SUBMISSION

Responses and all related materials must be received by noon on Wednesday, December 6, 2006, Pacific Standard Time. Either email or hard copy submission is acceptable. The subject line and/or envelope should be clearly marked as "Response to Federal Lobbyist RFQ" and submitted to:

Sharon Friedrichsen
County Executive Office
105 E. Anapamu Street, Room 406
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
sfried@sbcao.org

Requests for clarification on the RFQ must be in writing and may be submitted by email or fax to Sharon Friedrichsen at sfried@sbcao.org or 805.568.3414. No requests will be received after November 30, 2006 at 5 PM PST. All questions and answers will then be posted by December 1, 2006 on the County Executive Office's website <http://www.countyofsb.org/cao/legislative/legis.asp>

FORMAT AND CONTENT OF RESPONSE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (1-2 pages)

- Overview of the firm: how long has the firm been in business, size of the firm, the average number of clients within the firms' portfolio, the type(s) of clients within the firm's portfolio and any commonalities that exist among clients; and,
- Firm's primary areas(s) of expertise; and,
- Firms' success rate or return on investment for clients and/or general accomplishments; and,
- Firm's ability to enter into a contract with the County and commence work on the legislative platform by December 23, 2006; and,
- Identification and contact information of lead person(s) that will serve as County's primary contact; and,
- Fee for service: Provide fee for one year of contract. Indicate monthly retainer and estimated travel expenses. If fee is "all inclusive", please indicate if the fee includes travel to Santa Barbara and for how many visits. Please note if the fee includes the County's entire legislative platform or limits services to only a few projects or issues (if so, which projects and issues).

QUALIFICATIONS (1-2 pages)

- Describe the firm's experience in representing governmental entities, California-based entities and/or coastal communities as well as representing clients that have other similarities to Santa Barbara County.
- Describe the firm's experience and success/major accomplishments in advocating/lobbying for the type(s) of projects and issues outlined in the County's legislative platform.

- Describe the firm's understanding of the County's legislative platform. Please select 2 projects/issues from the County's legislative platform and describe your firm's approach to advocating for this issue (how to approach funding, how to approach legislators, etc) as well as identify any potential challenges associated the respective project/issue.
- Describe the qualifications of the lead person(s) that will serve as the primary contact for the County. Qualifications should illustrate general expertise in advocacy/lobbying as well as specific experience in working with clients and issues similar to those of Santa Barbara County.

CLIENT LIST AND TWO REFERENCES (1 page max)

- Please provide a sample of current clients and contact information for two references.

SAMPLE LETTER OF CORRESPONDENCE (1 page)

- Please submit a sample letter of correspondence using one of the projects or issues identified as part of the County's legislative platform.

EVALUATION and TIMEFRAME

All proposals are due by noon (PST) on December 7, 2006. Proposals will be reviewed by staff from the County Executive Office and at least one member of the County's Legislative Program Committee and evaluated based on the format and content outlined in this proposal as follows:

- Executive Summary (15 points)
- Fee for Service (25 points)
- Qualifications (50 points- 25 for firm, 15 for lead contact)
- References (15 points)
- Sample Letter (15 points)
- Adherence to Requirements (15 points)
- Overall Format (15 points)

The firm(s) with the highest score, out of a total of 150 possible points, will be selected as the primary lobbyist firm and enter into contract negotiations with the County. Since the County's legislative platform is diverse, there may be the possibility of using multiple firms for advocacy related to specific projects and issues. The specialization of the firm and its total score will be used to determine if the County should also enter into contract negotiations with other firms. The County's Legislative Program Committee will be briefed of the selection process at its December 18, 2006 meeting and the Board of Supervisors will be asked to authorize a contract with the selected firm(s) at its December 19, 2006 meeting. Staff will work the selected firm(s) to finalize a contract by December 25, 2006. The selected firm(s) will immediately being working with County staff on the legislative platform in order to meet any funding and legislative request deadlines for the 2007 session.