



## REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL

**DATE:** Regular Meeting of January 14, 2025

**TO:** Mayor and Members of the City Council

**SUBMITTED BY:** Dante Hall, City Manager

**SUBJECT:** Professional Services Agreement with Tai Ginsberg & Associates LLC ("TG&A") for an amount not to exceed \$50,000 to Provide Strategic Federal Advocacy Consulting Services to Advance the Hercules Hub Project and Appropriating \$50,000 from the General Fund Capital Reserves to Fully Fund the Contract

### **RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Adopt a Resolution approving a \$50,000 agreement with Tai Ginsberg & Associates LLC ("TG&A") to provide strategic federal advocacy consulting services to advance the Hercules Hub Project and appropriating \$50,000 from the General Fund Capital Reserves to fund the contract fully.

### **BACKGROUND:**

The Hercules Hub is envisioned as a premier, regional, state-of-the-art housing and transportation community along the waterfront that will connect thousands of homes with a new train stop along the Capitol Corridor, bicycle and pedestrian pathways, bus routes, carpool options, and eventual ferry service. The Hub and its surrounding community will be a model for successful transit-oriented communities in the Bay Area.

The project has received full environmental clearance, the right of way has been secured, and \$46M in improvements have been constructed to date using multiple funding sources, including grant funding. This includes the extension of John Muir Parkway and Bayfront Boulevard to provide direct access from I-80/SR-4 to The Hub; also, Bay Trail gap closures, including to the north to provide connectivity to Rodeo, a community of concern, and to the south from Railroad Avenue to tie into the existing trail towards Sante Fe Avenue.

Since late 2022, the City has worked with the transportation firm Gray-Bowen-Scott (GBS) to raise the profile of the Hercules Hub by building relationships with regional, state, and federal officials to help develop and implement a funding plan for the project. The City and GBS have been successful in identifying potential grant opportunities, securing a \$2.4M Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) grant through a joint application with Capitol Corridor JPA to partially fund the design phase, and executing a federal earmark of \$850,000 from Congressman John Garamendi. Approximately \$107M in additional funding is needed to build the infrastructure for the Capitol Corridor train to stop.

### **ANALYSIS:**

As part of the adopted 2024-2026 Hercules City Council Strategic Goal Workplan, the City Council directed staff to secure the services of a federal lobbyist as an advocate on behalf of the Hercules Hub. City staff has evaluated several federal lobbying firms and recommends approving a contract with Tai Ginsberg & Associates LLC (“TG&A”) to provide strategic federal advocacy consulting services to advance the Hercules Hub Project. TG&A is a client-focused government relations firm. The firm’s broad yet specialized knowledge base is matched by its experience working with a diverse set of clients. TG&A is comprised of a team of highly knowledgeable and seasoned veteran government relations professionals with substantial experience on Capitol Hill and working with infrastructure, transportation, energy, and technology clients, and trade associations. TG&A has a notable record of successfully delivering for clients, such as the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA), Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority, and the San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA).

Staff recommends executing an agreement with TG&A because of their intimate understanding of our regional railroad system and their specialized experience and success in helping some of our transportation partners secure Federal discretionary funds. TG&A also offers unique insight and experienced coordination with the US Department of Transportation, the Federal Railroad Administration, and the Union Pacific Railroad.

### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

After thoroughly evaluating various federal lobbying firms, staff has identified TG&A as the most suitable choice for our needs. This recommendation is grounded in TG&A's extensive knowledge of the city's regional railroad system, which positions them uniquely to navigate the intricacies of our transportation challenges. Their specialized experience in this sector and a proven track record of successfully securing federal discretionary funds make them an invaluable partner for our initiatives.

The General Fund Capital Reserve has sufficient resources to finance this agreement. Therefore, staff recommends that the City Council approve the appropriation of \$50,000

from the General Fund Capital Reserve to engage TG&A's services. This investment will enhance our ability to effectively advocate for the city's transportation priorities at the federal level.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Resolution
2. Proposal for Strategic Federal Advocacy Consulting Services