

**Columbus Consolidated Government
Council Meeting Agenda Item**

TO:	Mayor and Councilors
AGENDA SUBJECT:	Grant Writing Services (Annual Contract) – RFP No. 25-0020
INITIATED BY:	Finance Department

It is requested that Council authorize the execution of an annual contract with GAFS Co. LLC d/b/a Grant and Funding Solutions Company (Key West, FL) for Grant Writing Services on an “as needed” basis.

The services are needed to secure grant funding through the preparation and submittal of grant proposals to federal, state agencies, and any other applicable entities.

The contract term shall be for three (3) years with the option to renew for two (2) additional twelve-month periods. Contract renewal will be contingent upon the mutual agreement of the City and the Contractor.

Annual Contract History:

As this is the initial contract, there is no prior contractual history.

RFP Advertisement and Receipt of Proposals:

RFP Specifications were posted on the web pages of the Purchasing Division and the Georgia Procurement Registry on May 8, 2025. This RFP has been advertised, opened and evaluated. Eleven (11) proposals were received on June 6, 2025.

The responding vendors were:

- GAFS Co. d/b/a Grant and Funding Solutions Company (Key West, FL)**
- CAFA Enterprises LLC (Dallas, GA)
- Grants Office LLC (Rochester, NY)
- GTC 360° Advisors (Austin, Texas)
- JetCo Solutions (Grand Rapids, MI)
- K & M Enterprises: Research and Fund Development, Inc. (Morongo Valley, CA)
- SEAS Community Partners, Inc (Atlanta, GA)
- *Sunflower Grant Writers (Omaha, NE)
- The Ferguson Group (Washington, DC)
- VRD Investments LLC (Tyrone, GA)
- Witt O’Brien’s (Houston, TX)

*The proposal submitted by Sunflower Grant Writers was deemed non-responsive due the exclusion of multiple required items.

The following events took place after receipt of the proposals:

RFP MEETINGS/EVENTS		
Description	Date	Agenda/Action
Pre-Evaluation	08/18/25	The Purchasing Manager advised evaluation committee members of the RFP rules and process. The proposals were distributed to the committee.
1 st Evaluation	09/08/25	The Evaluation Committee discussed each proposal and determined that clarifications were required.
Clarification Letter to Vendors	10/06/25	Clarification request letters forwarded to vendors.
Clarification Letters Vendors Responses	11/11/25	The final clarification letters were received and forwarded to the Committee for review. No further clarifications were requested and the voting Committee members indicated they were ready to begin evaluations.
Evaluation Ballots Sent to Committee	01/14/26	Evaluation forms forwarded to voting committee members.
Evaluation Ballots Received	06/05/26	The final set of evaluation forms were received from voting committee members. <i>*Please Note: The evaluation process was delayed due the hospitalization of one voter. When Purchasing was made aware that a voter was in the hospital, an attempt was made to utilize an alternate voter. The alternate voter was also delayed in completing the evaluation and subsequently left employment with the city. After the hospitalized voter was back at work, it was requested that they complete their evaluation as originally intended.</i>
Recommendation Received	06/12/26	Via ballot, the voting Committee members, through a majority vote recommended awarding the contract to GAFS Co., the highest scoring vendor.

Evaluation Committee:

The proposals were reviewed by an Evaluation Committee, which consisted of seven voting members: one member from the Columbus Police Department; one member from the Parks & Recreation Department; one member from Superior Court; one member from the Columbus Fire & EMS Department; one member from the Community Reinvestment Department; one member from the Finance Department and one member from METRA.

One representative from the Superior Court and one representative from the Finance Department served as alternate voters.

Serving as a non-voting advisor was one representative from the Finance Department.

Award Recommendation:

The Evaluation Committee unanimously recommends award of the contract to GAFS Co. d/b/a Grant and Funding Solutions Company (Key West, FL), the highest scoring vendor, as reflected by their comments provided below:

- Highly experienced team with strong Public-Sector grant expertise. Demonstrated success securing major federal and state funding. DBE Certification applicable to federal and local guidelines.

- The vendor has a wide range of experience that matches the grant writing needs of the City.
- Good work history. The firm seems experienced with local governments.
- Success rate, step-by-step tech approach, and list of awards.

Vendor Experience/Qualifications:

- GAFS Co. d/b/a Grant and Funding Solutions Company has been in the business of providing effective funding solutions with proven, high-impact results for businesses and government agencies since 2017.
- GAFS Co. d/b/a Grant and Funding Solutions Company successfully obtained \$77.1 million dollars in awarded grants, along with \$29.9 million in pending grants.
- The Key Personnel of GAFS Co. d/b/a Grant and Funding Solutions Company have nearly 70 years' experience in grant writing services.

Client Work History:

- City of Menlo Park 03/14/2025
Menlo Park, CA Contract Value: \$2,297,000
The grant will help fund the installation of additional EV charging stations across Menlo Park, making it easier for residents, commuters and visitors to choose cleaner transportation options.
- 3X Five Media, LLC Pending Official Award
California Contract Value: \$499,750
A 21-episode PBS cooking show that boosts California specialty crop consumption by teaching food literacy, healthy eating, and sustainability to viewers of all ages.
- City of Davis, Cybersecurity Enhancements 12/27/2024
City of Davis Contract Value: \$250,000
The multi-phase project aims to improve the City's cybersecurity posture by implementing an asset management system for enhanced inventory tracking, launching a city-wide security awareness training program, and improving email security with DMARC, DKIM, and SPF protocols. The project also includes expanding endpoint encryption, developing a vulnerability management program, and introducing a third-party risk management framework.

The City's Procurement Ordinance Article 3-110, Competitive Sealed Proposals for the procurement of Equipment, Supplies and Professional Services, governs the RFP Process. During the RFP process, there is no formal opening due to the possibility of negotiated components of the proposal. In the event City Council does not approve the recommended offeror, no proposal responses or any negotiated components are made public until after the award of the contract. Therefore, the evaluation results and cost information has been submitted to the Mayor in a separate memo for informational purposes.

The recommended firm's cost proposal is within the Department's budget based upon the expected level of services. Funds are budgeted each fiscal year for this on-going expense: General Fund - Finance – Accounting – Consulting; 0101-200-2100-ACCT-6315.

A RESOLUTION

NO. _____

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF AN ANNUAL CONTRACT WITH GAFS CO. LLC D/B/A GRANT AND FUNDING SOLUTIONS COMPANY (KEY WEST, FL) TO PROVIDE GRANT WRITING SERVICES FOR THE COLUMBUS CONSOLIDATED GOVERNMENT ON AN “AS NEEDED” BASIS.

WHEREAS, an RFP was administered (RFP No. 25-0020) and Eleven (11) proposals were received; and,

WHEREAS, the proposal submitted by GAFS Co. LLC d/b/a Grant and Funding Solutions Company, met all proposal requirements and was evaluated most responsive to the RFP; and,

WHEREAS, the initial term of the contract shall be for three (3) years, with the option to renew for two (2) additional twelve-month periods. Contract renewal will be contingent upon the mutual agreement of the City and the Contractor.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE COUNCIL OF COLUMBUS, GEORGIA, HEREBY RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

That the Mayor and/or his designee is hereby authorized to execute an annual contract with GAFS Co. LLC d/b/a Grant and Funding Solutions Company (Key West, FL) for grant writing services for the Columbus Consolidated Government on an “as needed” basis. The recommended firm’s cost proposal is within the Department’s budget based upon the expected level of services. Funds are budgeted each fiscal year for this on-going expense: General Fund - Finance – Accounting – Consulting; 0101-200-2100-ACCT-6315.

Introduced at a regular meeting of the Council of Columbus, Georgia, held the _____ day of _____, 2026 and adopted at said meeting by the affirmative vote of _____ members of said Council.

- Councilor Allen voting _____
- Councilor Anker voting _____
- Councilor Barnes voting _____
- Councilor Chambers voting _____
- Councilor Cogle voting _____
- Councilor Crabb voting _____
- Councilor Davis voting _____
- Councilor Garrett voting _____
- Councilor Huff voting _____
- Councilor Tucker voting _____

Lindsey G. McLemore, Clerk of Council

B.H. “Skip” Henderson III, Mayor