



**BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF MERCER ISLAND**

**AB 6114
July 19, 2022
Consent Agenda**

AGENDA BILL INFORMATION

TITLE:	AB 6114: Appropriation for Lobbyist Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Authorize the City Manager to negotiate and execute a contract for lobbyist services and appropriate the funds needed for lobbyist services for 2022.	

DEPARTMENT:	City Manager
STAFF:	Jessi Bon, City Manager
COUNCIL LIAISON:	n/a
EXHIBITS:	1. Proposal from Federici, Esser & Gallagher 2. Lobbyist Services Scope of Work
CITY COUNCIL PRIORITY:	2. Articulate, confirm, and communicate a vision for effective and efficient city services. Stabilize the organization, optimize resources, and develop a long-term plan for fiscal sustainability.

AMOUNT OF EXPENDITURE	\$ 30,000
AMOUNT BUDGETED	\$ Choose an item.
APPROPRIATION REQUIRED	\$ 30,000

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this agenda bill is to confirm the selection of the lobbyist team of Federici, Esser & Gallagher, authorize the City Manager to negotiate a contract for lobbyist services, and appropriate the funds needed for lobbyist services in 2022, in the amount of \$30,000.

- The 2022 Washington State Legislative session required a significant amount of attention and engagement by the Mayor and City Council, the City Manager, the Leadership Team, and other City staff.
- At the conclusion of the legislative session, the City Manager debriefed with Council leadership and decided to explore working with a contract lobbyist. The level of work required during the last legislative session was simply not sustainable with current resources.
- At the April 19, 2022 City Council meeting, City Council authorized a [Request for Proposals](#) (RFP) process to solicit lobbyist firms and individuals.
- An ad-hoc committee of Councilmembers and City staff conducted interviews with two applicant firms and selected the team of Nick Federici, Luke Esser, and Anita Gallagher to provide the City lobbyist services.

- Funding for this contract will come from General Fund surplus for 2022 and will be included in the 2023-2024 budget.

BACKGROUND

State and federal regulations have a significant impact on communities at the local level and require the action and advocacy of City Council and staff. The issues that Mercer Island Councilmembers and City leadership tracked during the 2022 legislative session included, among others:

- Housing legislation including [ESHB 1660](#) and [HB 1770](#)
- Police reform legislation
- Open Public Meetings Act legislation
- The State budget, including impacts on the Public Works Trust Fund

Councilmembers and City leadership dedicated substantial time responding to these issues by engaging with the Mercer Island community, communicating with elected officials, and developing statements and positions to represent community interests.

At the conclusion of the legislative session, the City Manager debriefed with Council leadership and decided to explore working with a contract lobbyist. The level of work required during the last legislative session was simply not sustainable with current resources.

At the April 19, 2022 City Council meeting, City Council approved the scope of work and authorized an RFP process to solicit proposals from lobbyists (see [AB 6061](#)). The RFP was issued in late April 2022, closed on May 19, 2022, and yielded submissions from two local firms. An ad-hoc committee of Deputy Mayor Rosenbaum, Councilmember Jacobson, and Councilmember Weiker, along with City staff, reviewed submissions and conducted interviews with these two firms in early June.

ISSUE/DISCUSSION

The ad-hoc committee recommends the lobbying team of Nick Federici, Luke Esser, and Anita Gallagher given their experience, expertise, at both the state and Federal level, and demonstrable understanding of the issues in the region and in particular, on Mercer Island (see the team's Proposal to the City's RFP in Exhibit 1).

If authorized, the City will enter into professional service agreement through the end of 2024 with the lobbying team of Nick Federici, Luke Esser, and Anita Gallagher for year-round lobbyist services focused on the 2023 and 2024 legislative sessions.

Lobbyist services were not included in the 2021-2022 budget, so an appropriation of \$30,000 (\$6,000 per month) is needed to cover the contract for the remainder of this year. The estimated contract costs for 2023 and 2024 will be included in the biennial budget.

The full scope of work is attached as Exhibit 2 and summarized below:

- Development of legislative priorities and strategies to achieve them.
- Representation with state and Federal committees and agencies.
- Monitoring of issues impacting Mercer Island, identification of funding opportunities, and attendance at City Council meetings to provide direct reporting and consultation.

NEXT STEPS

The lobbyist team will begin working with the City Council and staff this summer to develop legislative priorities and will present their initial strategy and approach to the City Council in the fall of 2022.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

1. Authorize the City Manager to negotiate and execute a contract with Federici, Esser, and Gallagher, a Washington-based partnership, for professional lobbyist services; and
2. Appropriate \$30,000 for lobbyist services through 2022.