



Office of the City Manager

CONSENT CALENDAR
September 16, 2025

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Paul Buddenhagen, City Manager
Submitted by: David Sprague, Fire Chief
Subject: Contract: Swifthawk Consulting, LLC for Professional Services

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute a contract and any amendments with Swifthawk Consulting, LLC for surge staffing services for the Berkeley Fire Department (Department), in an amount not to exceed \$300,000 per year from October 1, 2025, through September 30, 2028, with an option to extend for two (2) additional one-year terms, not to exceed \$300,000 per year.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

Funding for this contract will be provided from the Department's baseline budget, including General Fund, UC Settlement Fund, and Measure FF. Contract spending will not exceed \$300,000 per year.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The Department experiences staffing shortages due to retirements, extended leave, unfilled positions, and workload increases prompted by new programs, regulations, and grant-funded initiatives. The ability for staff to meet these conditions and deliver the expected service is affected by both operational and administrative capacity.

The City released RFP Specification No. 25-11742-C, *Berkeley Fire Department Surge Staffing*, on June 16, 2025. Addendum B (July 8, 2025) defined the scope: the vendor will identify, recruit, and manage qualified Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) for the following short-term situations:

- Filling interim vacancies to maintain service delivery
- Providing expertise for specialized projects, policy, and compliance
- Supporting peak workload resulting from new programs, legislative, or grant requirements
- Knowledge transfer and succession planning
- Recruitment, onboarding, and program support

11 vendors submitted proposals, which were evaluated by a team of raters, three finalists were invited for interviews, and Swifthawk Consulting, LLC emerged as the best qualified to provide these services.

Services under this new contract will strengthen Fire Department operations, facilitate project delivery, and ensure resilience in core public safety functions.

BACKGROUND

The Department's workload has increased significantly due to the implementation of new technology, compliance with emerging regulations, expansion of services following emerging community expectations, and the expansion of grant-supported programs. This contract will allow the Department to engage and access specialized talent quickly to prevent operational disruptions.

Typical assignments under this contract are transient in nature and include graphic design, videography, photography, technical consulting for CEQA compliance, project management, GIS, grant program implementation, and administrative coordination.

The scope defined in the RFP also requires the contractor to pre-screen and present top candidates to the Department, coordinate onboarding, and—where applicable—transfer specialized knowledge to permanent staff to build in-house capacity.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

There are no identifiable environmental effects or opportunities associated with the action requested in this report.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The City conducted a competitive bid process and received 11 responses. A competitive process confirmed that Swifthawk Consulting, LLC can provide qualified SMEs across the range of functions identified in the RFP, at competitive rates, with the capacity to deliver on short notice.

Given the Department's significant current and upcoming workload, including changes to the fire code, grant opportunities, and technology upgrades, failure to secure surge staffing support would risk delays in critical projects and service delivery.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

None.

CONTACT PERSON

David Sprague, Fire Chief, (510) 981-3473

ATTACHMENTS

1. Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

Contract: Swifthawk Consulting, LLC for Professional Services

WHEREAS, the Berkeley Fire Department has experienced staffing shortages from retirements, extended leave, unfilled positions, and elevated workload demands related to policy changes, new programs, and grants; and

WHEREAS, the Department requires the ability to quickly secure qualified Subject Matter Experts and technical specialists to fill interim vacancies, complete specialized projects, handle peak workload, and support knowledge transfer; and

WHEREAS, the City issued RFP Specification No. 25-11742-C, Berkeley Fire Department Surge Staffing, on June 16, 2025; and

WHEREAS, following a competitive selection process, Swifthawk Consulting, LLC was determined to be the most qualified and responsive proposer; and

WHEREAS, funding is available in the Fire Department's baseline budget allocation from the General Fund, UC Settlement Fund, Measure FF, and other eligible funding sources; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the City Manager is authorized to execute a contract and any amendments with Swifthawk Consulting, LLC for surge staffing services for the Berkeley Fire Department in an amount not to exceed \$300,000 per year from October 1, 2025, through September 30, 2028, with an option to extend for two (2) additional one-year terms, not to exceed \$300,000 per year.

