



**CITY OF SPOKANE**  
808 W. SPOKANE FALLS BLVD.  
SPOKANE, WASHINGTON 99201-3327  
509.625.6250

November 9, 2016

Troy Bruner, Chair  
Spokane Ethics Committee  
City of Spokane  
808 W. Spokane Falls Blvd.  
Spokane, WA 99201

**Re: Request for Decision from the City of Spokane Ethics Committee**

Dear Mr. Bruner,

I am seeking a review and approval to utilize the services of a City employee who retired from City employment on April 30, 2016. The Mayor and City Council are seeking review and approval to contract for services with the former City employee within one year of leaving city service, as defined in the City's Code of Ethics section 01.04.030.

Rick Romero worked for the City of Spokane for over 8 years, most recently spending the vast majority of his time working as the City's Utilities Director. Mr. Romero has extensive experience with the City of Spokane's administration, council and citizens. During his tenure as the Utilities Director Rick developed and started implementation of the City's Integrated Clean Water Plan, to help the City not only meet its regulatory compliance requirements but achieve net environmental benefit of a cleaner river faster for our citizens and community. Rick has continued to work with the Mayor and Council as a volunteer for the past several months. This has resulted in the development of a joint framework which will serve as a starting point for the development of the City's Integrated Municipal Strategic Plan. Mr. Romero will provide professional services to the Mayor and City Council to support the continued development and implementation of the City's Integrated Municipal Strategic Plan.

A professional services contract allows the Mayor and Council to purchase the professional services of Rick Romero (Consultant) to continue to assist with the development, refinement, outreach and implementation of a full Integrated Strategic Plan over the next 18 months. I would like a renewal provision at the end of 18 months upon agreement of the Mayor and City Council with terms and conditions to be re-negotiated.

His anticipated first 6 months within the contract, Rick will produce and deliver an executable City Plan for Sustainable Community Development and Growth. The plan will be vetted by the community and formally adopted by the Mayor and the Council. This plan is anticipated to include 4-5 major strategic initiatives accompanied by 15-20 key tactical plans. The strategic plan and process will be fully coordinated and aligned with the City's Comprehensive Plan Update to be adopted by June, 2017.

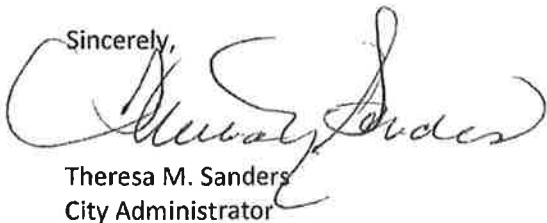


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I do not see that retaining Rick's services in the this endeavor poses any problem, but in an abundance of precaution, I thought it would be best to advise the Ethic Commission of this issue if there should be any concerns. I understand the Commission has reviewed previous requests of this nature, and provided guidance. I am happy to provide any additional information upon request.

Thank you for taking the time to refer this matter to the Ethics Committee. We await additional details.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Theresa M. Sanders". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Theresa M. Sanders  
City Administrator



## CITY OF SPOKANE ETHICS COMMISSION

### Ethics Commission's Decision Regarding Request by the City's Chief Administrative Officer for Contract Approval


On November 9, 2016, Theresa Sanders, the City of Spokane's Chief Administrative Officer, provided notice to the City of Spokane's Ethics Commission, pursuant to SMC 1.04.030 (O) 3, of the City's request for the Commission's approval to contract for the services of a former city employee. A copy of the letter is attached to this decision. SMC 1.04.030 (O) 3 provides that whenever a City officer or employee wishes to contract with a former City officer or employee for expert or consultant services within one year of the latter's leaving City service, advance notice shall be given to and approval received from the Ethics Commission.

The Ethics Commission met on November 16, 2016 to review Ms. Sanders' request. The request stated that Rick Romero retired from the City on April 30, 2016 after eight years of employment where he served most recently as the City's Utilities Director. Part of his work involved the development of the City's Integrated Clean Water Plan. Mr. Romero has been volunteering in the Mayor's office over the past several months creating a joint frame work for the development of the City's Integrated Municipal Strategic Plan. The City desires to enter into a professional services contract with Mr. Romero to provide professional services to the Mayor and the City Council to support the continued development and implementation of the City's Integrated Municipal Strategic Plan.

Pursuant to the facts set forth in Ms. Sanders' November 9, 2016 letter and submitted during the November 16, 2016 meeting and the Commission's deliberation, the Ethics Commission determines that:

1. Appropriate notice has been given to the Ethics Commission,
2. The City failed to demonstrate that the skill set developed by Mr. Romero though his previous employment was related or similar to the work to be performed under the proposed contract or that his skill set was essential to the subsequent contract,
3. The City did not demonstrate that it had pursued, through competitive solicitation, other individuals qualified to apply for the position and perform the work.

The Ethics Commission voted three to one of the Ethics Commission members present for and participating in the hearing to not approve the request by the Chief Administrative Officer for approval to to contract with Rick Romero for professional services.

  
Troy Bruner, Chairperson

10-21-16  
Date