

TOWN *Of* **PARADISE VALLEY**



STAFF REPORT

TO: Mayor Stanton and Town Council Members

FROM: Andrew Ching, Town Manager

DATE: May 28, 2026

DEPARTMENT: Town Manager's Office
Andrew Ching, 480.348.3533

AGENDA TITLE:

Adopt a one-year Contract Extension with HighGround for Legislative Services on Behalf of the Town

SUMMARY STATEMENT:

The Town of Paradise Valley has worked with HighGround consulting for its lobbying services since 2012. The services provided by HighGround have been critical to the success of the Town preserving its photo enforcement capabilities, gaining local control to more adequately enforce Short-Term Rentals and protecting the Town's revenue through construction sales tax.

BACKGROUND:

HighGround has provided government relations and advocacy to the Town of Paradise Valley since 2012. In 2017 the Town posted a competitive bid process for legislative services and only received one response from HighGround. In 2020, the Town extended the 2017 contract and increased the monthly fee from \$3,000 to \$4,000. In 2023, the contract was extended for an additional 3 years, and the annual fee was increased to \$78,000.

The Town seeks to extend the contract with HighGround, Inc. for the purpose of providing government relations and advocacy services.

The scope of work includes State lobbying services, including but not limited to:

- Representation, information sharing, strategic professional advice, and support services
- Identify, monitor, track, and lobby for and against specific legislative and policy proposals on behalf of the Town of Paradise Valley
- Provide strategic advice on the engagement of elected officials during the legislative process

- Testify on behalf of the Town at legislative hearings
- Facilitate information on legislative committee agendas and floor calendars
- Coordinate communications between the Town and legislative members, leadership, and the Governor
- Assist with the formulation of the Town's Legislative Agenda
- At the Town's request, provide updates on legislative activity at Town Council meetings and Study Sessions
- Help coordinate the Town's annual Legislative Breakfast
- Coordinate legislative messaging with the Town's communications professionals

The Town has access to the firm's Government Affairs Team:

- Douglas Cole, Chief Operating Officer, serving as lead contact for the Town
- Nick Ponder, Senior Vice President – Governmental Affairs (former Legislative Director for the League of Arizona Cities and Towns)
- Jessica Blazina, Senior Government Affairs Executive (former Intergovernmental Affairs Administrator, City of Avondale)
- Chuck Coughlin, CEO and President

BUDGETARY IMPACT:

This contract extension does not increase the annual fee to HighGround, which remains at \$78,000 annually.

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt Linking Agreement Contract Extension with HighGround for legislative services on behalf of the Town for one additional year at \$78,000 annually.

ATTACHMENT(S):

- A. Staff report
- B. Contract Amendment No. 1