



# City Council Memorandum

City of Arts & Innovation

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**TO:** HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL      **DATE:** OCTOBER 17, 2023  
**FROM:** CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE      **WARDS:** ALL  
**SUBJECT:** AUTHORIZE LEGAL SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH BUCHALTER

**ISSUE:**

To consider approval of a Legal Services Agreement with Buchalter for specialized legal services related to the California Public Utilities Commission.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the City Council:

1. Approve a Legal Services Agreement with Buchalter with a term expiring on June 30, 2026; and
2. Authorize the City Attorney to execute such Legal Services Agreement.

**DISCUSSION:**

City Charter section 702, "Eligibility, powers and duties of City Attorney," provides, in part, that "the City Council shall have control of all legal business and proceedings and may employ other attorneys to take charge of any litigation or matter or to assist the City Attorney therein."

The City Attorney is seeking approval of a Legal Services Agreement with Buchalter for specialized legal services related to the California Public Utilities Commission ("CPUC"), as set forth below.

**Buchalter**

The Legal Services Agreement with Buchalter expired on June 30, 2023. Buchalter previously provided specialized legal advice related to the CPUC. The City Attorney's Office currently does not have expertise with CPUC proceedings and requires such specialized legal services as issues arise, from time to time.

**STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:** The retention of experienced outside counsel to provide

legal advice and supports all priorities of the City of Riverside’s Envision Riverside 2025 Strategic Plan, as such advice is provided to all departments of the City, the City Council, Boards and Commissions.

This item aligns with each of the five Cross-Cutting Threads as follows:

1. **Community Trust** – Riverside is transparent and makes decisions based on sound policy, inclusive community engagement, involvement of City Boards & Commissions, and timely and reliable information. Use of outside counsel that specializes in specific areas of the law supports and aids the making of such decisions.
2. **Equity** – Use of outside counsel that specialize in specific areas of the law benefits the entire community by ensuring that such efforts comply with all aspects of the law.
3. **Fiscal Responsibility** – The City Attorney’s Office is expending funds in a careful and judicious manner balanced against the need for specialized legal counsel when the circumstances warrant.
4. **Innovation** – The retention of specialized legal counsel to provide specialized legal advice supports City innovation efforts by ensuring that such efforts comply with all aspects of the law.
5. **Sustainability & Resiliency** – The retention of specialized legal counsel to provide specialized legal advice supports City goals of sustainability and resiliency by ensuring that such efforts comply with all aspects of the law.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact associated with the Legal Services Agreement. Any impact will occur when Buchalter is retained for a particular engagement.

Prepared by: Phaedra Norton, City Attorney

Certified as to  
availability of funds: Edward Enriquez, Chief Financial Officer/City Treasurer

Attachment: Legal Services Agreement