

SERVICES AGREEMENT

THIS AGREEMENT is made and entered into this ____ day of _____, 20__, by and between the City of Merced, a California Charter Municipal Corporation, whose address of record is 678 West 18th Street, Merced, California 95340, (hereinafter referred to as “City”) and Social Policy Research Associates, Inc., a Corporation, whose address of record is 1950 Franklin Street, Suite 1805, Oakland, CA 94612, (hereinafter referred to as “Contractor”).

WHEREAS, City is undertaking a project to conduct a local evaluation report of the City's Pathways to Success program funded by the Board of State and Community Corrections' California Violence, Intervention, and Prevention grant ; and,

WHEREAS, Contractor represents that it possesses the professional skills to provide data analytics, evaluate the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of a program, and develop a report on the findings for the Board of State and Community Corrections review services in connection with said project.

NOW, THEREFORE, the parties hereto, in consideration of the mutual covenants hereinafter recited, hereby agree as follows:

1. SCOPE OF SERVICES. The Contractor shall furnish the following services: Contractor shall provide the program services described in Exhibit “A” attached hereto.

No additional services shall be performed by Contractor unless approved in advance in writing by the City, stating the dollar value of the services, the method of payment, and any adjustment in contract time. All such services are to be coordinated with City and the results of the work shall be monitored by the City Manager or designee. However, the means by which the work is accomplished shall be the sole responsibility of the Contractor.

2. TIME OF PERFORMANCE. All of the work outlined in the Scope of Services shall be completed in accordance with the Schedule outlined in Exhibit “A” attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference. By mutual agreement and written addendum to this Agreement, the City and the Contractor may change the requirements in said Schedule.

3. TERM OF AGREEMENT. The term of this Agreement shall commence upon the day first above written and end on December 31, 2026.

4. COMPENSATION. Payment by the City to the Contractor for actual services rendered under this Agreement shall be made upon presentation of an invoice detailing services performed under the Scope of Services, in accordance with the fee schedule set forth in Exhibit "B" attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference. The Contractor agrees to provide all services required under the Scope of Services in Exhibit "A" within the compensation amount set forth in Exhibit "B". For Contractor's services rendered under this Agreement, City shall pay Contractor the not to exceed sum of \$49,075.

5. METHOD OF PAYMENT. Compensation to Contractor shall be paid by the City after submission by Contractor of an invoice delineating the services performed.

6. RECORDS. It is understood and agreed that all plans, studies, specifications, data magnetically or otherwise recorded on computer or computer diskettes, records, files, reports, etc., in possession of the Contractor relating to the matters covered by this Agreement shall be the property of the City, and Contractor hereby agrees to deliver the same to the City upon termination of the Agreement. It is understood and agreed that the documents and other materials including but not limited to those set forth hereinabove, prepared pursuant to this Agreement are prepared specifically for the City and are not necessarily suitable for any future or other use.

7. CONTRACTOR'S BOOKS AND RECORDS. Contractor shall maintain any and all ledgers, books of account, invoices, vouchers, canceled checks, and other records or documents evidencing or relating to charges for services or expenditures and disbursements charged to the City for a minimum of three (3) years, or for any longer period required by law, from the date of final payment to the Contractor to this Agreement. Any records or documents required to be maintained shall be made available for inspection, audit and/or copying at any time during regular business hours, upon oral or written request of the City.

8. INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR. It is expressly understood that Contractor is an independent contractor and that its employees shall not be employees of or have any contractual relationship with the City. Contractor shall be responsible for the payment of all taxes, workers' compensation insurance and

unemployment insurance. Should Contractor desire any insurance protection, the Contractor is to acquire same at its expense.

In the event Contractor or any employee, agent, or subcontractor of Contractor providing services under this Agreement is determined by a court of competent jurisdiction or the California Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) to be eligible for enrollment in PERS as an employee of the City, Contractor shall indemnify, protect, defend, and hold harmless the City for the payment of any employee and/or employer contributions for PERS benefits on behalf of Contractor or its employees, agents, or subcontractors, as well as for the payment of any penalties and interest on such contributions, which would otherwise be the responsibility of City.

9. INDEMNITY. Contractor shall indemnify, protect, defend (with legal counsel selected by the City), save and hold City, its officers, employees, and agents, harmless from any and all claims or causes of action for death or injury to persons, or damage to property resulting from intentional or negligent acts, errors, or omissions of Contractor or Contractor's officers, employees, volunteers, and agents during performance of this Agreement; Contractor shall indemnify, protect, defend (with counsel selected by the City) save and hold City, its officers, employees and agents harmless from any and all claims or causes of action for any violation of any federal, state, or municipal law or ordinance, to the extent caused, in whole or in part, by the willful misconduct, negligent acts, or omissions of Contractor or its employees, subcontractors, or agents, or by the quality or character of Contractor's work. It is understood that the duty of Contractor to indemnify and hold harmless includes the duty to defend as set forth in Section 2778 of the California Civil Code. Acceptance by City of insurance certificates and endorsements required under this Agreement does not relieve Contractor from liability under this indemnification and hold harmless clause. This indemnification and hold harmless clause shall survive the termination of this Agreement and shall apply to any damages or claims for damages whether or not such insurance policies shall have been determined to apply. By execution of this Agreement, Contractor acknowledges and agrees to the provisions of this Section and that it is a material element of consideration.

10. INSURANCE. During the term of this Agreement, Contractor shall maintain in full force and effect at its own cost and expense, the following insurance coverage:

a. **Workers' Compensation Insurance.** Full workers' compensation insurance shall be provided with a limit of at least One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000) for any one person and as required by law, including Employer's Liability limits of \$1,000,000.00 per accident. The policy shall be endorsed to waive the insurer's subrogation rights against the City.

b. **General Liability.**

- (i) Contractor shall obtain and keep in full force and effect general liability coverage at least as broad as ISO commercial general liability coverage occurrence Form CG 0001.
- (ii) Contractor shall maintain limits of no less than One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000) per occurrence for bodily injury, personal injury and property damage.
- (iii) The City, its officers, employees, volunteers and agents are to be named as additional insureds under the policy, as respects liability arising out of work or operations performed by or on behalf of the Contractor.
- (iv) The policy shall stipulate that this insurance will operate as primary insurance for work performed by Contractor and its sub-contractors, and that any other insurance or self insurance maintained by City or other named insureds shall be excess and non-contributory.
- (v) Contractor shall maintain its commercial general liability coverage for three (3) years after completion of the work and shall add an additional insured endorsement form acceptable to the City naming the City of Merced, its officers, employees, agents and volunteers for each year thereafter for at least three (3) years after completion of the work. Copies of the annual renewal and additional insured endorsement form shall be sent to the City within thirty (30) days of the annual renewal.

c. **Automobile Insurance.**

- (i) Contractor shall obtain and keep in full force and effect an

automobile policy of at least One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000) per accident for bodily injury and property damage.

- (ii) The City, its officers, employees, volunteers and agents are to be named as additional insureds under the policy, as respects automobiles owned, leased, hired or borrowed by the Contractor.
- (iii) The policy shall stipulate that this insurance will operate as primary insurance for work performed by Contractor and its sub-contractors, and that any other insurance or self insurance maintained by City or other named insureds shall be excess and non-contributory.

d. Professional Liability Insurance. Contractor shall carry professional liability insurance appropriate to Contractor's profession in the minimum amount of One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000). Architects and engineers' coverage is to be endorsed to include contractual liability.

e. Cyber Liability Insurance. Consultant shall obtain and maintain Cyber Liability insurance in a minimum amount of One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000) per occurrence or claim, One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000) aggregate.

Coverage shall be sufficiently broad to respond to the duties and obligations as are undertaken by Consultant in this Agreement and shall include, but not be limited to, claims involving infringement of intellectual property, including, but not limited to, infringement of copyright, trademark, trade dress, invasion of privacy violations, information theft, damage to or destruction of electronic information, release of private information **or personally identifiable information (PII)**, alteration of electronic information, extortion, and network security. The policy shall provide coverage for breach response costs as well as regulatory fines and penalties and credit monitoring expenses with limits sufficient to respond to these obligations. Cyber Liability insurance must be maintained, and evidence of insurance shall be provided to CITY for at least two (2) years after completion of work under this Agreement.

f. Qualifications of Insurer. The insurance shall be provided by an acceptable insurance provider, as determined by City, which satisfies all of the following minimum requirements:

- (i) An insurance carrier admitted to do business in California and maintaining an agent for service of process within this State; and,
- (ii) An insurance carrier with a current A.M. Best Rating of A:VII or better (except for workers' compensation provided through the California State Compensation Fund).

g. Certificate of Insurance. Contractor shall complete and file with the City prior to engaging in any operation or activity set forth in this Agreement, certificates of insurance evidencing coverage as set forth above and which shall provide that no cancellation or expiration by the insurance company will be made during the term of this Agreement, without thirty (30) days written notice to City prior to the effective date of such cancellation—including cancellation for nonpayment of premium. In addition to any other remedies City may have, City reserves the right to withhold payment if Contractor's insurance policies are not current.

11. PREVAILING WAGES.

A. Labor Code Compliance. If the work performed under this Agreement falls within Labor Code Section 1720(a)(1) definition of a "public works" the Contractor agrees to comply with all of the applicable provisions of the Labor Code including, those provisions requiring the payment of not less than the general prevailing rate of wages. The Contractor further agrees to the penalties and forfeitures provided in said Code in the event a violation of any of the provisions occurs in the execution of this Agreement.

B. These wage rate determinations are made a specific part of this Agreement by reference pursuant to Labor Code Section 1773.2. General Prevailing Wage Rate Determinations may be obtained from the Department of Industrial Relations Internet site at <http://www.dir.ca.gov/>.

C. After award of the Agreement, and prior to commencing work, all applicable General Prevailing Wage Rate Determinations, if applicable, are to be obtained by the Contractor from the Department of Industrial Relations. These wage rate determinations are to be posted by the Contractor at the job site in accordance with Section 1773.2 of the California Labor Code.

D. Contractor agrees to include prevailing wage requirements, if applicable, in all subcontracts when the work to be performed by the subcontractor under this Agreement is a “public works” as defined in Labor Code Section 1720(a)(1) and Labor Code Section 1771.

12. NOTICES. Any notices which either party may desire to give to the other party under this Agreement must be in writing and may be given either by: (i) personal service, (ii) delivery by a reputable document delivery service, such as, but not limited to, Federal Express, that provides a receipt showing date and time of delivery, or (iii) mailing in the United States Mail, certified mail, postage prepaid, return receipt requested, addressed to the address of the party as set forth below or at any other address as that party may later designate by Notice. Notice shall be effective upon delivery to the addresses specified below or on the third business day following deposit with the document delivery service or United States Mail as provided above.

To City: City of Merced
678 West 18th Street
Merced, California 95340
Attention: City Manager

To Contractor: Social Policy Research Associates, Inc.
1950 Franklin Street, Suite 1805
Oakland, Ca 94612
Attention:

13. ASSIGNABILITY OF AGREEMENT. It is understood and agreed that this Agreement contemplates personal performance by the Contractor and is based upon a determination of its unique personal competence and experience and upon its specialized personal knowledge. Assignments of any or all rights, duties or obligations of the Contractor under this Agreement will be permitted only with the express written consent of the City.

14. TERMINATION FOR CONVENIENCE OF CITY. The City may terminate this Agreement any time by mailing a notice in writing to Contractor that the Agreement is terminated. Said Agreement shall then be deemed terminated, and no further work shall be performed by Contractor. If the Agreement is so terminated, the Contractor shall be paid for that percentage of the phase of work actually completed, based on a pro rata portion of the compensation for said phase satisfactorily completed at the time the notice of termination is received.

15. CONFORMANCE TO APPLICABLE LAWS. Contractor shall comply with its standard of care regarding all applicable Federal, State, and municipal laws, rules and ordinances. No discrimination shall be made by Contractor in the employment of persons to work under this contract because of race, color, national origin, ancestry, disability, sex or religion of such person.

Contractor hereby promises and agrees to comply with all of the provisions of the Federal Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C.A. 1101 *et seq.*), as amended; and in connection therewith, shall not employ unauthorized aliens as defined therein. Should Contractor so employ such unauthorized aliens for the performance of work and/or services covered by this Agreement, and should any agency or instrumentality of the federal or state government, including the courts, impose sanctions against the City for such use of unauthorized aliens, Contractor hereby agrees to, and shall, reimburse City for the cost of all such sanctions imposed, together with any and all costs, including attorneys' fees, incurred by the City in connection therewith.

16. WAIVER. In the event that either City or Contractor shall at any time or times waive any breach of this Agreement by the other, such waiver shall not constitute a waiver of any other or succeeding breach of this Agreement, whether of the same or any other covenant, condition or obligation. Waiver shall not be deemed effective until and unless signed by the waiving party.

17. INCONSISTENT OR CONFLICTING TERMS IN AGREEMENT AND EXHIBITS. In the event of any contradiction or inconsistency between any attached document(s) or exhibit(s) incorporated by reference herein and the provisions of the Agreement itself, the terms of the Agreement shall control.

Any exhibit that is attached and incorporated by reference shall be limited to the purposes for which it is attached, as specified in this Agreement. Any contractual terms or conditions contained in such exhibit imposing additional obligations on the City are not binding upon the City unless specifically agreed to in writing, and initialed by the authorized City representative, as to each additional contractual term or condition.

18. AMBIGUITIES. This Agreement has been negotiated at arms' length between persons knowledgeable in the matters dealt with herein. Accordingly, any rule of law, including, but not limited to, Section 1654 of the Civil Code of California, or any other statutes, legal decisions, or common-law principles of similar effect, that would require interpretation of any ambiguities in this

Agreement against the party that drafted this Agreement is of no application and is hereby expressly waived.

19. VENUE. This Agreement and all matters relating to it shall be governed by the laws of the State of California and any action brought relating to this agreement shall be held exclusively in a state court in the County of Merced.

20. AMENDMENT. This Agreement shall not be amended, modified, or otherwise changed unless in writing and signed by both parties hereto.

21. INTEGRATION. This Agreement constitutes the entire understanding and agreement of the parties and supersedes all previous and/or contemporaneous understanding or agreement between the parties with respect to all or any part of the subject matter hereof.

22. AUTHORITY TO EXECUTE. The person or persons executing this Agreement on behalf of the parties hereto warrants and represents that he/she/they has/have the authority to execute this Agreement on behalf of their entity and has/have the authority to bind their party to the performance of its obligations hereunder.

23. COUNTERPARTS. This Agreement may be executed in one or more counterparts with each counterpart being deemed an original. No counterpart shall be deemed to be an original or presumed delivered unless and until the counterparts executed by the other parties hereto are in the physical possession of the party or parties seeking enforcement thereof.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have caused this Agreement to be executed on the date first above written.

CITY OF MERCED
A California Charter Municipal
Corporation

BY: _____
D. Scott McBride
City Manager

ATTEST:
D. SCOTT MCBRIDE, CITY CLERK

BY: _____
Assistant/Deputy City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:
CRAIG J. CORNWELL, CITY ATTORNEY

BY: Craig Cornwell 1/28/2026
City Attorney Date

ACCOUNT DATA:
M. VENUS RODRIGUEZ, FINANCE OFFICER

BY: _____
Verified by Finance Officer

{Signatures continued on next page}

CONTRACTOR
Social Policy Research Associates, Inc.
A California Corporation

BY: _____
(Signature)

(Typed Name)

Its: _____
(Title)

BY: _____
(Signature)

(Typed Name)

Its: _____
(Title)

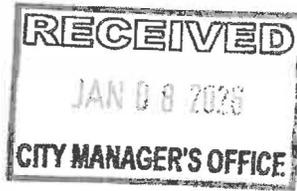
Taxpayer I.D. No. _____

ADDRESS: 1950 Franklin Street
Suite 1805
Oakland, CA 94612

TELEPHONE: (510) 763-1499

FAX: _____

E-MAIL:



Social Policy Research Associates

January 7, 2026

To whom it may concern,

Social Policy Research Associates (SPR) is pleased to submit this bid to the City of Merced to develop its Local Evaluation Report (LER) for its California Violence Intervention and Prevention (CalVIP) program, Pathways to Success. SPR is willing and able to perform the work requested and agrees to provide services and develop the LER within the timeframes specified in the RFP.

SPR has been in business since 1991. In our nearly 35 years of operation, SPR has conducted hundreds of program evaluations and developed hundreds of research reports for federal, state, and local government clients as well as foundations and other private organizations both across California and nationwide. Over the last 20 years, SPR has also specialized in conducting evaluations and reporting on programs designed to reduce involvement and re-involvement in the justice system for adults, young adults, and youth using wide-ranging evidence-based practices. This includes work in supporting grantees in completing their LERs as part of its work as the statewide evaluator for the CalVIP cohort 3 program and in direct support of multiple BSCC grantees as their third-party evaluator. We have also evaluated and reported on similar reentry programs and violence intervention and prevention and reentry services at both the national level and within many different municipalities across California. Throughout our work, SPR has employed a wide range of technical skills including both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. Our proposal below shows we have the methodological and content expertise to successfully carry out the development of this report for the City of Merced's CalVIP Cohort 4 program.

Finally, our organization has an extensive public record of doing similar work and the references to support it. We have many highly qualified staff capable of carrying out this project and we can complete the proposed project on time and within the allotted budget. And our organization is not on the federal suspension or debarment list.

Andrew Wiegand, President

January 7, 2026

Date



1950 Franklin Street, Suite 1805
Oakland, CA 94612
Phone: (510) 763-1499
www.spra.com

EXHIBIT A

Proposal for the City of Merced's Pathway to Success Program, Local Evaluation Report

Under the California Violence Intervention and Prevention Program, Cohort 4

January 7, 2025

Prepared by:

Social Policy Research Associates
1950 Franklin Street, Suite 1805
Oakland, CA 94612

Prepared for:

City of Merced
Attn to: Sarah Knoester
678 W 18th Street
Merced, CA 95340



Points of Contact:

Christian Geckeler, Senior Associate
Christian_geckeler@spra.com
(510) 788-2461

Sergio Martinez, Associate
Sergio_martinez@spra.com
(510) 788-2478

Qualifications and Experience

Social Policy Research Associates (SPR), as a whole, and our proposed team has exemplary qualifications when it comes to developing the Local Evaluation Report (LER) for the City of Merced's California Violence Intervention and Prevention (CalVIP) grant, supporting its program known as Pathways to Success. Below are our organizational and staff qualifications for completing this work.

A. SPR's Organizational Experience

Founded in 1991, Social Policy Research Associates (SPR) is an employee-owned small business, located in Oakland, California, which has received national recognition for its evaluation services to clients at all levels of government (i.e., federal, state, and local) as well as community-based organizations (CBOs), foundations, and other private entities. Our portfolio also includes over 20 years of collecting and analyzing data and reporting on research and evaluation findings around programs designed to reduce people's involvement and re-involvement in the justice system. Throughout this work, we have examined the implementation, outcomes, and impacts of programs working with adults, young adults, and youth at all points in the continuum of justice-system involvement, ranging from prevention of initial contact and services for individuals while involved or incarcerated to those reentering back into society. The following sections detail SPR's organization qualifications regarding our capacity, experience with, and ability to meet the City of Merced's project needs in analyzing and reporting on data related to its CalVIP, Pathways to Success program.

1. SPR's has Extensive Expertise with BSCC-funded Projects

Our portfolio includes several Board of State Community and Corrections (BSCC)-funded projects, especially those involving CalVIP. Notably, SPR was the ***Statewide Evaluator and Technical Assistance Provider for CalVIP Cohort 3 Grantees***, where we developed tools and guidance for grantees around data collection and reporting, provided technical assistance to city and CBO grantees, and conducted quality assurance and review of individual grantees' local evaluation plans (LEPs), LERs, and quarterly progress reporting (QPR). We also analyzed these statewide data, developing the statewide evaluation report of the CalVIP Cohort 3 program. Through this work, we developed a deep understanding of the requirements involved in BSCC-funded projects and their expectations of grantees, read and reviewed a wide range of LERs, and came to understand the expectations of grantees around producing them, and had an opportunity to analyze and write about findings statewide. We also worked with a wide range of city government agencies and CBOs, located throughout the state, understanding their violence intervention and prevention programs (e.g. employment, health, mentoring, and supportive services) in a wide range of settings, including hospital-based programs, probation and police department programs, street outreach services, community-based services, and school-based services.

SPR also currently provides third-party evaluation services to multiple BSCC grantees, working with them around BSCC reporting requirements and in conducting their local evaluations. These include:

- The ***Evaluation of the Yolo County Probation Department's Proposition 47 Grant Program***. This program aims to reduce recidivism and improve long term health, housing, and employment outcomes among individuals involved with the probation department on drug-related charges and with persistent substance abuse and mental health issues. SPR is working with the Probation Department and Cache Creek Lodge to develop data collection tools and training for both the local evaluation and for quarterly reporting to the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC). For this project, SPR is also conducting interviews and focus groups and conducting both qualitative and quantitative data analysis, summarizing findings in the local evaluation report to the BSCC.
- The ***Evaluation of the City of Fresno's CalVIP Cohort 4 Grant Program***. This program works with youth of various ages through multiple, different programs to help them avoid involvement in justice system. For this project, SPR joined the project late in the grant cycle as would be involved in the current project, where existing evaluation efforts were already underway. We are providing targeted evaluation services through the preparation and analysis of specific sets of program data and the development of specific evaluation portions of their LER.
- The ***Evaluation of the City of Greenfield's Byrne SCIP Grant Program***. This program works with at risk and opportunity youth identified through the Police Department, Courts, and Schools and provides cognitive behavioral, prosocial, and other services designed to reduce the risk of violence by and to area youth. Similar to its work for Yolo County, SPR is providing support with the City's LEP, LER, and QPRs.

Through this work, we have developed a deep understanding of BSCC-funded projects and the BSCC's expectations around evaluations and reporting.

2. SPR's Portfolio Includes Programs Serving Justice System Involved Individuals with Clients and Partners at all Levels of Government

In addition to our work on BSCC-funded projects, SPR has considerable experience conducting evaluations of programs serving justice system-involved individuals to draw upon if we were to work for the City of Merced. Our portfolio includes evaluations for city, county, state, and federal agency clients, as well as partnerships with partner public agencies and other types of organizations (e.g., workforce development boards, community-based organizations, school districts, colleges, employers, care facilities, etc.) who deliver program services and conduct data collection.

A few examples of past city and county work within California involving programs and populations similar to Pathways to Success Program include our evaluations of the **City of San José's Bringing Everyone's Strengths Together (BEST) Program**, **City of Los Angeles' Regional Initiative for Social Enterprise (LA:RISE)**, and **Evaluation of Santa Clara County's Office of Diversion and Reentry Services (ODRS)**. In the BEST evaluation, for example, we conducted annual evaluations over multiple years of gang-prevention, intervention, and suppression programs for children and youth, run by numerous CBOs, with research involving participant survey data collection, interviews, participant focus groups, administrative data analysis, and reporting. Our evaluation of LA:RISE involved an implementation study and multi-year randomized control trial impact analysis of this workforce initiative operated across several CBOs serving justice-involved individuals, individuals at risk of homelessness, and opportunity youth. The evaluation for ODRS involved the analysis of qualitative and quantitative data to study the implementation of these social enterprise employment and entrepreneurship programs for the county.

SPR is also well-versed in California-wide initiatives focused on justice-system involved populations, which frequently involve highly barriered populations. In addition to our work for the BSCC noted above, SPR is conducting the second round of its **Evaluation of California's Breaking Barriers Initiative** for the California Workforce Development Board, which provides employment-based services operated by multiple CBOs throughout the state to individuals with high barriers to employment (e.g., criminal justice system involvement, at risk of experiencing homelessness, etc.) for youth and adults. In this multi-year evaluation, SPR is conducting implementation and impact studies and has already developed three different evaluation reports involving the analysis of qualitative and quantitative data. Relatedly, SPR conducted the **WIOA Employment Social Enterprise Program Evaluation**, a statewide initiative led by the California Employment Development Department (EDD) in coordination with the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency (LWDA). This program allocated and awarded \$9,927,164 of WIOA Title I Governor's discretionary funds to seven CBOs to design, develop, and implement programs to provide enhanced employment services to individuals facing barriers to employment. SPR's developmental evaluation examined program implementation and participant-level outcomes through a mixed-methods approach and resulted in one comprehensive final report and various other written deliverables.

For our work with federal clients, also includes relevant work for the City's project, especially in our understanding of reentry programming. SPR has completed rigorous evaluations for the National Institute of Justice, including two evaluations of the **Second Chance Act (SCA) Adult Demonstration Program**, which provided pre- and post-release reentry services such as employment, substance use disorder treatment, and housing services. SPR has also conducted evaluations for the U.S. Department of Labor (US DOL), focusing on both pre-

release and post-release reentry services through our Evaluations of the ***Pathway Home Programs, Reentry Project (RP) Grants, and Job Challenge Programs***. These projects involved multi-year evaluations involving the analysis of wide ranging qualitative and quantitative data to describe the reentry services provided to adults, young adults, and youth in various types of employment, education, and training programs. All of these projects have resulted in multiple evaluation reports, detailing the implementation of these programs and participants outcomes and, in some cases, program impacts.

3. SPR's Portfolio includes Data Collection, Analysis, and Content Expertise

SPR researchers are adept at managing and analyzing a wide range of data types and at applying both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies to generate meaningful and actionable insights. As outlined above, SPR's work includes impact, outcome, and implementation studies, drawing on survey data, staff interviews, participant interviews and focus groups, and various types of administrative data collected from both programs and third parties. In our work, SPR has regularly collected, analyzed, and reported on findings derived from various types of administrative data, including arrest, conviction, incarceration, and probation data, workforce system and employment and earnings data, housing data, program management information system data, food and nutrition services data, and data on a wide variety of other supportive services. We have collected these data at the national level and in most states, including many at the state and local levels within California. Over the years, we have also built a robust infrastructure for cleaning, compiling, and analyzing datasets, allowing us to generate high-quality, comprehensive evaluations, and have robust, secure mechanisms for transferring, storing, and managing sensitive data. We also regularly use programs like NVivo for the analysis of qualitative data. And we regularly integrate these different types of data to tell robust and complex stories about the programs being implemented and the participants engaging in their services, including participant stories, trends and lessons learned around implementation, as well as participant outcomes. Importantly, we have wide-ranging content area expertise as our evaluations have examined wide-ranging service strategies, including: employment and training services; educational services; diversion, expungement, and other legal services (e.g., fees and ID reinstatement); substance abuse treatment, health, and mental health services; cognitive-behavioral and other behavioral modification services; housing services; pro-social and other community engagement and mentoring services; and various other kinds of financial and in-kind support. As such, we are well-prepared to review the data collected on Pathways to Success participants, including the various internal records, self-reported and survey, data, and administrative data, tracking participant assessments, placement in employment, law enforcement involvement, and involvement in services like job training, as well as self-assessments by participants of their personal capacities and self-betterment.

4. SPR Approaches our Work in a Sensitive and Culturally Competent Manner

SPR brings decades of experience partnering with communities, public agencies, and CBOs to design, evaluate, and strengthen programs that address systemic inequities, particularly those impacting justice system involved individuals. Our work has closely examined the barriers people face to employment and housing, including limited soft and hard employment skills, co-occurring behavioral health and substance use challenges, lack of transportation, and other life challenges. We have also developed a deep understanding of the intersecting barriers facing justice-involved individuals, and have evaluated and supported a wide range of service models such as pre- and post-release case management, diversion and expungement programs, cognitive behavioral therapy, alternative courts, workforce and education pathways, and behavioral health interventions across urban and rural jurisdictions in California and nationwide. Our work has also examined the abatement of these barriers for adults, transitional-age youth, and young people navigating overlapping systems in high-stakes and often under-resourced environments. In addition to using this knowledge in developing focused and meaningful data collection tools, we bring this experience to bear in two important main ways.

First, it is a hallmark of SPR's mission and values that we listen to all voices and consider alternative worldviews, with an emphasis on capturing the perspectives of vulnerable populations and the voices of the individuals being served. For example, we have supported place-based strategies rooted in cultural context and lived experience. In SPR's ***Evaluations of the Los Angeles Regional Initiative for Social Enterprise (LA:RISE)***, we centered the voices of youth and adults from racially and economically marginalized communities in our reports through the use of quotations and narrative examples, illustrating key analytic findings from our implementation and outcomes evaluation. In our ***Evaluation of the Pathway Home*** program, we partnered with individuals with justice system involvement to co-develop interview protocols, interpret findings, and refine implementation tools. Across these and other efforts, we have prioritized non-extractive, trust-building approaches—such as compensating participants equitably, holding space in culturally affirming ways, and making sure that local communities helped shape both evaluation processes and outcomes. And in our ***Evaluation of the San Jose BEST Program***, we regularly evaluated surveys of participating youth assessing their gains in confidence, sense of reliance on others and their community, and feelings of personal safety.

Second, SPR regularly works to protect the individuals served by the programs it evaluates. We are experienced with securely transferring, storing, and managing sensitive, personally identifiable information (PII), having gathered employment, health, criminal justice, and other data from agencies and organizations across California and nationwide. We prioritize strong data stewardship practices and uphold rigorous data security protocols to protect all sensitive data. Our approach includes categorizing data by sensitivity and implementing

multi-layered protections, including limiting access based on the principle of least privilege and encrypting data in transit and at rest, and for sensitive data to be destroyed at the earliest opportunity using physical and digital shredding. SPR also maintains clear incident reporting procedures and requires that all staff complete data security training and fulfill any project-specific clearance requirements.

B. SPR's Proposed Staffing

We plan to staff the project with a highly qualified group of individuals who have extensive experience with BSCC-funded projects, including CalVIP in particular, and evaluation reporting on projects involving justice system involved individuals, in general.



Christian Geckler, M.P.P., Senior Associate, will serve as Project Director.

Mr. Geckler has over 20 years of research experience and 16 years of designing and leading evaluations of programs helping people of all ages avoid involvement and reinvolvement in the criminal justice system. His work includes impact, outcome, and implementation studies and leading and contributing to dozens of evaluation reports for public sector and private clients throughout California and nationwide. He is currently Project Director for three BSCC-funded evaluations as the third-party evaluator, including the *Yolo County Probation Department's Proposition 47 program*, the *City of Greenfield's Byrne SCIP grant*, and the *City of Fresno's CalVIP Cohort 4 program*. He is also SPR's Project Director for SPR's portion of the work on the US Department of Labor's *Pathway Home Evaluation*, examining employment and training programs operated pre- and post-release throughout the country. He also previously led SPR's statewide *Evaluation of CalVIP, Cohort 3* for the BSCC and has served in various lead analytic and writing roles for the *City of San Jose's Bringing Everyone's Strengths Together (BEST)* and *Youth Intervention Services (YIS) evaluations*, programs focused on reducing youth involvement in the criminal justice system through various city and CBO-operated violence intervention and prevention services.



Sergio Martinez, M.A., Associate, will serve as Project Manager.

Mr. Martinez has more than four years of experience leading projects and tasks related to reducing barriers to employment and helping justice-system-involved individuals at SPR. He currently serves as the project manager for the *Yolo County Proposition 47 Evaluation* and recently led the development of the final evaluation report for the *WIOA Employment Social Enterprise Program Evaluation*, which provides transitional employment services to participants with multiple barriers, including justice-system-involved individuals. He also brings experience leading both quantitative and qualitative data collection efforts with program staff and justice-system-involved participants and has developed key written deliverables for SPR's evaluations of the WIOA

Employment Social Enterprise Program, the Santa Clara County's Regional Initiative for Social Enterprise and Small Business Opportunity Program, conducted on behalf of Santa Clara County's Office of Diversion and Reentry, as well as the U.S. DOL-funded Reentry Projects Grant Evaluation, which provided services to young adults and adults, nationwide. Mr. Martinez has also served as project manager and task lead across various other workforce development and human services projects.



Efren Gomez, M.P.P., Associate, will serve as an Analyst and Author. Mr. Gomez brings over a decade of research experience focused on opportunity youth and individuals facing significant barriers, with deep expertise in mixed-methods evaluation and implementation science. He currently manages Social Policy Research Associates' evaluation of the City of Fresno's CalVIP Cohort 4 program, overseeing the assessment of violence prevention and intervention strategies that support youth through coordinated service delivery. In this role, he examines program implementation and participants' short-term outcomes to inform continuous improvement and public safety decision-making. Mr. Gomez was a major contributor to the Breaking Barriers to Employment Initiative report, playing a key role in analyzing findings and developing report content focused on workforce reentry for individuals facing significant barriers. He also served as the lead author of a technical report for the U.S. DOL-funded National Health Emergency Disaster Recovery Grants, which evaluated recovery-oriented employment strategies supporting individuals impacted by the opioid crisis.



Olivia Pham, M.S., Programmer, will serve as Programmer. Ms. Pham brings programming experience in data analytics and data visualization through different media, including infographic design, digital storytelling (video editing and narration) and web application development to showcase data. She has experience cleaning, processing and providing quality assurance around BSCC QPR data for SPR's statewide Evaluation of CalVIP, Cohort 3, and for all of SPR's third-party evaluations of BSCC-funded programs. She also has extensive experiences cleaning and analyzing justice system, survey, employment, education, and other data for municipalities and counties across California and in states throughout the country.

Importantly, these team members do not work alone; SPR has adequate resources and infrastructure to support our team. Our proposed team will rely on SPR's strong project management and quality assurance infrastructure to meet the City's expectations including timely delivery of the LER within the specified budget. Our management approach adheres to the following four tenets:

- **Coordinate work to ensure that project needs are met.** SPR project teams have established procedures to achieve outstanding technical results. The foundation of these procedures is a clear delineation of responsibilities and roles at the outside of a project and clear communication through ongoing meetings and informal communication mechanisms. We also engage in regular communication with the client to keep them fully informed about progress and to collect ongoing feedback.
- **Ensure adherence to a schedule agreed upon with the client.** To ensure that the team meets scheduled milestones and deliverables, project directors and managers establish clear timelines, work plans, and other internal communication tools (like project planning within Teams) for initiating and completing project activities, to which all team members are expected to adhere. These staff are responsible for monitoring project progress overall and any reporting to clients.
- **Ensure work is completed within budget.** Our team is committed to producing high-quality products in the most cost-efficient manner, by deploying skilled personnel who are well matched to the tasks they are assigned, engaging in close project coordination to avoid duplicated efforts and bottlenecks, and maintaining business systems to support project monitoring and cost control (e.g., Unanet), reviewing regular project budget and expenditure reports.
- **Early identification and solving of technical and contractual problems.** Each of the mechanisms above provide a means for identifying emerging problems early before they become acute. Additionally, project directors meet (individually) with senior and administrative staff at quarterly project review meetings to discuss what issues or challenges projects may be facing. SPR is firmly committed to deploying additional organizational resources—additional personnel, staff with special qualifications, or other interventions—for timely and effective problem resolution.

Work Plan and Timeline

Following the RFP, SPR will assume a timeline for this project which starts at grant announcement (approximately February 18, 2026) and leaves adequate time for the City to Submit the final LER to the BSCC by the June 30, 2026 deadline. To accomplish this project on time and within the budget, we anticipate organizing the work into the following tasks with deliverables noted in bold.

Task 1: Project Kickoff and Report Outline. Upon contract award and as soon as possible (ideally within the first week), the proposed SPR project director and project manager plan to work with the City to schedule a kickoff meeting with key staff members who oversee the grant. This meeting will focus on helping our team understand the Pathways to Success program and its goals and objectives, as well as the goals and objectives of the evaluation,

including those that may be specific to the City and outside of the requirements outlined by the BSCC in their grant and evaluation guidance. Doing so may involve clarifying and expanding upon components of the Local Evaluation Plan (LEP), which our team has closely reviewed already, such as how different data sources (e.g., internal records, participant self-report records, law enforcement reports, and retrospective surveys) may link up to different components of the program model (e.g., the program's inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impacts as spelled out in the program logic model), or how outcomes (e.g., activities around delivery of case management, social and emotional learning skills, job training, social skills and anger management, mentoring, and supportive services) are measured within the different data sources.

Prior to the kickoff meeting and as follow-up to it, our team will also begin coordinating with the relevant City staff about delivery of program data, using SPR (or the City's) system for transmitting data securely, as needed. This includes transmission of the data sources (from the LEP and noted above) or those sources that might surface during the kickoff meeting and may not be currently included in the LEP, such as the program's QPR data. We would also schedule, in coordination with the City, regular check-in meetings to discuss questions we have about the data based on ongoing review and analysis and to confer about the direction of the report. This task will culminate in the delivery of a **Detailed Outline** for the LER, which will map out our proposed approach for the report, making sure that it aligns with the guidance provided by the BSCC and their statewide TA provider around the overall structure and purpose of the report (i.e., including an executive summary, statement of the project goals and objectives, assessing the effectiveness of implementation activities, describing the program model and evaluation design, a presentation of outcomes, and a conclusion) as well as including room to address City-specific evaluation goals and objectives, if different.

Task 2: Ongoing Analysis and Draft LER. Over approximately the next month, and as we wait for the City's review and feedback on the outline, our team will continue to clean, prepare, and analyze the available program data. This may involve the use of qualitative analysis software to code narrative data such as individual participant records or other documents to identify and group similar data together that may provide rich details about participant progress and other factors that may inform both program information about program implementation and participant outcomes. The analysis will also include quantitative analysis, identifying numbers enrolled and description of the program participants, ideally from available QPR data and the other above-mentioned data sources to describe participant outputs (enrollment and participation) along with outcomes (e.g., employment, criminal justice activity, and social and emotional growth). We will then compile results and write about them in an initial **Draft LER**, following the detailed outline, and submit this to the City for its review.

Task 3: Additional Analysis and Revisions. After the City has completed its review of the Draft LER, the study team will plan to meet with City staff to go over and clarify feedback. At that point, the study team will then begin the process of revising the Draft LER and conducting any additional analysis needed. After meeting and reviewing feedback, the study team will first set out to address all feedback in a tracked changes format and will conduct additional analysis, as needed, to clarify findings or explore areas about which the City would like additional details, whether these are included in the report or provided to the City under separate cover for internal evaluation purposes. The study team will then provide a **Track Changes** and **Clean Version** of the Draft LER (in Microsoft Word), indicating responses to all feedback and incorporating all revisions in a transparent way.

Task 4: Final LER. The study team will then submit the clean version of the Draft LER to its external editor for final line editing and proofing and engage in its own internal read through and final quality assurance process and formatting process to ensure its compliance with all BSCC requirements and to ensure a high-quality final, public version. At the end of this process, the study team will produce a **Final LER** in both Microsoft Word and PDF versions with ample time for the City to do a final review before submission to the BSCC. If needed, SPR can engage additional revisions and resubmit this final version, still in time for final submission to the BSCC.

The following Exhibit outlines SPR’s proposed timeline for work completion.

City of Merced’s Pathway to Success Program, Local Evaluation Report Timeline

Activity	Deliverable	Date(s) (all 2026)	Assigned To
Task 1: Project Kick-off and Detailed Outline	Report Outline	Kickoff: 2/23 Outline: 3/6	SPR/City SPR
Task 2: Ongoing Analysis and Draft LER	Draft LER	Initial collection: 2/18 – 3/6 Subsequent analysis and Draft LER: 3/7 – 4/12	SPR/City SPR
City of Merced Review	Marked up Draft LER	4/13 – 5/1	City of Merced
Task 3: Additional Analysis and Revisions	Track Changes and Clean Version	5/1 – 5/22	SPR
Task 4: Final LER	Final LER	5/25 – 6/12	SPR
Additional revisions, as needed	Additional revisions	6/15 – 6/30	SPR/City of Merced

Proposal for the City of Merced's Pathway to Success Program, Local Evaluation Report

Under the California Violence Intervention and Prevention Program, Cohort 4

Fee Proposal

January 7, 2025

Prepared by:

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EXHIBIT B

Fee Proposal

For the development of the Local Evaluation Report (LER) for the City of Merced’s Pathway to Success Program, Social Policy Research Associates (SPR) proposes a total budget of \$49,075, which falls below the City’s budgeted amount of \$49,300. We propose conducting this as a Firm Fixed Price contract, where revenue is recognized and invoiced based on a deliverable schedule as outlined in the exhibit below. Each task in the exhibit is described in the Work Plan and Timeline portion of the main proposal as well as its associated deliverable. The cost of each deliverable is inclusive of all reimbursable costs associated with that given task. SPR does not anticipate any travel or materials for the project or any costs outside of labor, overhead, fringe, and G&A, which are included in the listed cost. The only exception is for Task 4, the inclusion of supportive services costs associated with the use of an external editor. We can provide additional details upon request.

Activity	Deliverable	Proposed Due Date	Cost
Task 1: Project Kick-off and Detailed Outline	Report Outline	March 6, 2026	\$ 9,500
Task 2: Ongoing Analysis and Draft LER	Draft LER	April 12, 2026	\$ 23,900
Task 3: Additional Analysis and Revisions	Track Changes and Clean Version	May 22, 2026	\$ 8,975
Task 4: Final LER	Final LER	June 12, 2026	\$ 6,700
Total			\$ 49,075