



Sandy City Council Office

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To: Sandy City Council
From: Aaron Dekeyzer, Council Member At-Large
Date: June 5, 2026
Subject: Proposal for the Creation of a Citywide Grants Administration Position

Purpose

This memorandum proposes the creation and funding of a centralized, citywide Grants Administrator position to be housed within the Administrative Services Department. The estimated annual fiscal impact for the salary and benefits of this full-time position is approximately \$163,000. In FY27 the position will be funded solely within the general fund, however, I'd like the position to be funded through an administrative charge to each department / fund beginning in FY28.

Reasoning and Need

Currently, Sandy City utilizes a decentralized approach to pursuing and managing grant opportunities. While individual departments do an admirable job seeking out funding, this fragmented structure limits our ability to coordinate and to aggressively pursue large-scale federal, state, and private funding. Municipalities across the Wasatch Front, including South Jordan, West Valley City, and Ogden, have recognized the immense value of dedicated grant professionals to maximize non-tax revenues.

Establishing a centralized Grants Administrator will benefit Sandy City in quite a few ways:

1. **Return on Investment (ROI):** Over time, a dedicated professional focused on identifying and securing external revenue streams may quickly recover the personnel costs of the position by capturing funding that the City currently lacks the bandwidth or interdepartmental coordination to pursue.

A 2024 Urban Institute analysis found that municipalities with greater administrative staffing and payroll capacity were significantly more likely to win competitive federal grants and often received larger awards. This means that grant success is closely tied to institutional capacity, meaning that if we invest in a dedicated position we are substantially better positioned to compete for outside fundingⁱ

2. **Cross-Departmental Capacity:** Many departments lack the specialized technical expertise or staff hours required to navigate complex grant application portals and compliance guidelines. This position may act as an internal consultant, elevating the



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grant-writing capacity of every department in the City. Governmental capacity and prior grant experience play a significant role in determining federal grant success.ⁱⁱ

3. **Risk Mitigation and Compliance:** Post-award compliance, rigorous tracking, and strict federal/state reporting standards carry significant legal and financial audit risks. Centralizing this oversight ensures the City remains in excellent standing with all granting agencies.
4. **Strategic Alignment and Capital Projects Support:** Sandy City frequently reviews long-term capital improvement plans (CIP) and infrastructure needs. A centralized Grants Administrator can help to proactively map out upcoming high-cost city projects against multi-year federal and state funding cycles (such as legislative appropriations or infrastructure bills). Instead of seeking grants reactively when an emergency arises, this position helps ensure the City strategically positions its capital projects ahead of time to win major competitive funding, saving City taxpayer dollars on essential infrastructure.

While grant funding is never guaranteed, professional grant capacity is increasingly viewed as a strategic investment rather than an administrative expense. In addition to writing proposals, dedicated grant professionals help organizations identify competitive opportunities, align projects with funding priorities, manage compliance requirements, and build long-term funding strategies. So, the value of a grant position is not merely in writing applications, but in strengthening an organization's overall ability to compete for and manage external funding.ⁱⁱⁱ

Overview of Proposed Core Responsibilities

To ensure the position effectively balances citywide portfolio management with direct department support, the following list outlines the anticipated high-level responsibilities. While these duties reflect the core operational needs the Executive Branch will ultimately determine the final job description and responsibilities of the position.

- **Citywide Opportunity Identification & Strategy:** Research, identify, and evaluate potential grant funding opportunities at the federal, state, regional, and private levels. Develop and manage a comprehensive municipal grant plan aligned with Sandy City's goals, budget priorities, and funding needs.
- **Cross-Departmental Collaboration:** Partner directly with leadership and staff across all city departments to analyze their needs, align them with viable funding sources.
- **Proposal Development & Grant Writing:** Coordinate, write, and assemble grant applications and proposals. Ensure that all citywide applications meet strict submission guidelines and deadlines.



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- **Technical Assistance & Training:** Serve as the internal subject matter expert by providing technical guidance, application support, and training to departments to elevate their internal capacity and success in grant development.
- **Liaison & Intergovernmental Relations:** Act as the primary point of contact and citywide liaison for granting agencies, federal/state partners, and community stakeholders regarding all grant activities.
- **Financial Forecasting & Alignment:** Collaborate closely with the finance team, CDBG Administrator, and department heads to forecast annual grant revenues, track matching fund requirements, and assist in developing grant-related program budgets.
- **Post-Award Compliance Oversight:** Monitor active grants to ensure strict adherence to federal, state, and local regulatory requirements. Partner with city staff to verify that awarded funds are utilized properly and spent in accordance with applicable laws.

Fiscal Impact

The total estimated cost for the Grants Administrator position, inclusive of salary and benefits, is approximately \$163,000. Located within the Administrative Services Department, the Grants Administrator would be positioned to coordinate seamlessly with our finance team.

Recommendation

I propose that the City Council fund the creation of this position, as outlined in Exhibit A, in the upcoming budget to diversify our mix of revenues, alleviate operational strain on departmental staff, to centralize our grant programs, and to more proactively secure additional grant funding.

Exhibit A: General Fund	Amount	Detail	Notes
Ongoing:			
(New FTE) City Grants Administrator	\$ 163,000	CC 1720 - 4110XXX (Administrative Services)	Create new Grants Administrator Position (Within Administrative Services Department)
Total Ongoing Appropriations Increase	\$ 163,000		
GF Ongoing for One-Time Uses	\$ (163,000)	CC 2210 - 4146102 (Fire Fleet Purchases)	Reduce fleet purchases in Fire Department, reducing FY27 set-aside for Fire Tiller to \$112,000
Total Ongoing for One-Time Appropriations Decrease	\$ (163,000)		

ⁱ Hermans, A., & Rajninger, T. (2024, May 6). *Local governments with more staff and bigger budgets are more likely to win federal infrastructure grants*. Urban Wire. Urban Institute.

<https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/local-governments-more-staff-and-bigger-budgets-are-more-likely-win-federal>

ⁱⁱ Aldag, A. M. (2025). *Local management of federal grants: Determinants of awards and government capacity*. *Public Finance Journal*, 2(1), 39–55. <https://doi.org/10.59469/pfj.2025.25>

ⁱⁱⁱ Peirce, J. (2024, April 17). *Understand the ROI of hiring a professional grant writer for nonprofits*. Professional Nonprofit Grant Writing. <https://www.nonprofitgrantwriting.org/blogs/return-on-investment>