February 12, 2026

Mayor Henriquez
Commissioner Castillo
Commissioner Carey
Commissioner Haskell
Commissioner Kaufman
Commissioner Lee
Commissioner Veliz

Re: Agenda Item #32: Purchasing and Competitive Bidding

Dear Mayor Henriquez and Commissioners,

Last Stand opposes the proposed ordinance, which would, among other things, raise the competitive bidding threshold to $100,000 and allow a small handful of administrative officials to approve contracts of that magnitude without Commission oversight.

The justification offered for these changes is increased efficiency. While efficiency is a valid goal, the City has not demonstrated that the current system is failing in a way that justifies such a sweeping reduction in oversight.

Competitive bidding is not a bureaucratic obstacle; it is the mechanism by which residents maintain confidence that public funds are being stewarded responsibly. Procurement rules ensure that public money is spent transparently and that taxpayers receive the best quality and value. Competitive, open procurement requires the City to spell out expectations, such as technical standards and performance benchmarks, in writing and require vendors to show exactly how they will meet them. It creates a paper trail, public comparators, and a defensible rationale for how public funds are allocated. Weakening that framework increases the risk that relationships, rather than merit, shape outcomes.

The proposal allowing contractual services up to $100,000 based on only three price quotes is particularly concerning. Contracts at that level can include the drafting of policies and long-range plans or the hiring of specialized consultants, such as environmental planners, whose work shapes the City's future in significant ways. Allowing those decisions to be made through a limited, discretionary quote process gives the City control over which providers are invited to compete and, in practice, could allow contracts to be steered toward or away from particular firms without public scrutiny. Even absent wrongdoing, this structure invites the perception of favoritism and erodes public trust.

We are also concerned about drafting irregularities in the ordinance itself. Yet certain provisions appear to add new language without proper indication. For example, Sec. 2-771(3)(a)(4) does not currently exist

in the City Code but is not underlined as an addition. If the markup does not reliably show what is being changed, neither the Commission nor the public can fully evaluate the proposal. Proceeding under those conditions undermines informed decision-making and risks adopting language that has not been properly vetted. We brought this discrepancy to the attention of the City Attorney and the Clerk and requested that the item be postponed to allow correction and public clarity.

Last Stand respectfully urges the Commission to reject this proposal and reaffirm its commitment to transparent, competitive, and accountable governance.

Respectfully,

Board of Directors
Last Stand