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GRANT WRITING PROPOSAL AIMS TO BOOST CITY FUNDING



By [Francisco Ramirez Jr.](#)

A New Partnership Proposed

At the Selma City Council meeting on July 1, 2025, Sonia Hall, founder of Granted Solutions, presented a proposal to provide grant writing and project development services to the city. Hall, with over 21 years of experience, highlighted her track record of securing over \$580 million in grants, including \$17 million in one year for the city of Parlier. "I've been writing grants actually for the last 21, 22 years," Hall stated, emphasizing her expertise even as a former [city manager](#).

The council, including Mayor Scott Robertson, Mayor Pro Tem Sarah Guerra, and Council Members Jim Avalos, John Trujillo, and Santiago Ocegüera, engaged with Hall's proposal. She outlined two fee structures: a \$4,000 monthly retainer or a \$1,000 monthly retainer plus a 3% commission on [secured grants](#), with a negotiable cap. "There definitely would be a ceiling," Hall assured, addressing concerns about high commissions on large grants, such as a potential \$4 million grant.

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Comprehensive Grant Services

Hall's services extend beyond writing grants. She emphasized her ability to develop projects and administer grants, leveraging her 12 years of [city government](#) experience. I'm able to come in and [develop the project because I'm so/W familiar with cities](#), the inner working of a city," she said. Her services include funding research, community outreach, partnership creation, and housing programs like first-time homebuyer assistance and owner-occupied rehab.

She also highlighted her focus on a few clients to ensure quality. "Rather than trying to represent scores of clients scattered throughout the state, I have focused my attention on just a few clients," Hall explained, distancing her company from being a "grant mill." This approach, she noted, ensures projects are seen through to completion, avoiding delays due to lack of city capacity.

Upcoming Opportunities and Questions

Hall informed the council of two imminent grants: the Land and Water Conservation grant, due August 5, and the CalVIP grant for cities with high violence, for which Selma is eligible. "Selma is on that list," she said, noting the CalVIP grant's potential funding of \$1 million to \$5 million for the police department. She mentioned sharing this information with the [city manager](#) last year, urging application this year.

Council Member Trujillo questioned Selma's high-violence designation, citing a 35% crime reduction over two years. "I'd really like to see that list because it evades me," he said, expressing skepticism about the grant's criteria based on shootings. City staff noted the complexity of grant qualifications, with no [confirmation](#) on prior applications for this specific grant.



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A Strategic Investment

Hall underscored the return on investment, citing a \$333 return for every dollar spent on her services in one city, where she secured \$100 million in grants. "I want to be able to do that for you," she told the council, emphasizing her commitment to Selma's growth. The [council discussed](#) the feasibility of paying fees through grant disbursements, with Hall confirming, "It can be paid through the grant itself.

The proposal represents a potential boost for Selma's infrastructure and community projects, addressing funding needs through strategic grant acquisition. Mayor Robertson acknowledged Hall's extensive experience, noting her involvement in city government since 2004.

What opportunities do you think [grant funding could bring to your community?](#)