**SECTION 3: FIRM QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERTISE, AND EXPERIENCE**

**GRANTCITY CONSULTING, LLC (GCC)** stands out as a specialized disaster recovery consulting firm in California, combining deep industry insight with the distinct advantages of a small business. As your partner, GCC brings exceptional customer service, reduced costs, and streamlined operations without the unnecessary billing and bureaucratic delays often encountered with larger firms.

While we may not have the vast resources of transnational corporations, our nimble structure allows us to respond swiftly and effectively to your needs. GCC prides itself on its ability to offer personalized attention and tailored solutions that larger firms can't match. Our team is comprised of dedicated specialists who bring targeted expertise and a wealth of experience to each project.

GCC’s advantage lies in our deep understanding of the regulatory and disaster recovery landscapes despite a slightly smaller scale compared to some of our larger competitors. We have cultivated strong relationships and have access to a broad network of resources and specialists, ready to be leveraged in support of the City of Santa Cruz. Our team-oriented approach ensures that we work closely with our clients, understanding their unique challenges and providing effective, efficient solutions that drive recovery and resilience. Trust GCC to deliver professionalism, expertise, and the personalized service that your community deserves.

**RELEVANT PROJECT EXPERIENCE:**

GrantCity Consulting, LLC (GCC) has over a decade of experience providing critical post-disaster services that align seamlessly with the detailed scope of services required by the City of Santa Cruz. Our team is adept at performing detailed damage assessments, overseeing emergency repairs, and managing the entire lifecycle of design and construction services for permanent work projects. This expertise extends to meticulous grants management, crucial for navigating the complex funding landscapes associated with federal agencies, local municipalities, and applicable authorities. We ensure comprehensive documentation compliance, develop and maintain critical contract lists, and provide technical advisory to optimize funding utilization under the strict guidelines of the FEMA PAPPG and supplemental disaster-specific documentation.

Our proven track record includes supporting entities through various stages of disaster response and recovery, as illustrated below in ***Figure 2*.** GCC is well-versed in managing applicant briefings, fostering essential relationships, and providing operational support that enhances the capacity of city, county, and special districts in navigating cost recovery processes. Whether it's hosting meetings, coordinating with mutual aid agencies, or ensuring the strategic management of documentation and audits, GCC brings advanced operational knowledge and technological proficiency, ensuring efficient project management and communication.

Further, our role extends to representing and advocating for cities during critical negotiations with federal and state agencies, managing project tracking mechanisms, and preparing necessary documentation such as ICS Activity Logs and project worksheets. We assist with grant closeouts, audit preparations, and the final reconciliation of obligations and payments, ensuring each step adheres to compliance standards and maximizes potential funding without overburdening staff or creating inefficiencies.

By selecting GrantCity Consulting, LLC, you are choosing a partner that is not only experienced but also deeply committed to the detailed and strategic recovery of communities affected by disasters. Our approach is tailored to meet the specific needs of the City of Santa Cruz, ensuring that every phase of the disaster recovery process is handled with utmost professionalism and expertise.

| **TEAM GCC - DISASTER RECOVERY EXPERIENCE SINCE 2004** | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **STATE** | **DR** | **CLIENT** | **PORTFOLIO $** | **FUNDING SOURCE** |
| CA | DR-4683 | Merced County | $20M | FEMA, CDAA |
| CA | DR-4699 | Merced County | $10M | FEMA, CDAA |
| CA | DR-4301 | Merced County | $5M | FEMA, CDAA, FHWA-ER |
| CA | DR-4308 | Merced County | $5M | FEMA, CDAA, FHWA-ER |
| CA | DR-4301 | Monterey County | $10M | FEMA, CDAA |
| CA | DR-4308 | Monterey County | $10M | FEMA, CDAA |
| CA | DR-4193 | Napa County | $50M | FEMA |
| CA | DR-4193 | City of Napa | $25M | FEMA |
| CA | DR-4308 | California Dept. of Water Resources | $500M | FEMA |
| CA | DR-4482 | City of Grover Beach | $1M | FEMA |
| CA | DR-4482 | City of Oceanside | $5M | FEMA |
| CA | DR-4407 | City of Chico | $3M | FEMA |
| MA | DR-4496 | State of Massachusetts | $1B | FEMA |
| NY | DR-4020 | Montgomery County | $1M | FEMA |
| NY | DR-4031 | Montgomery County | $1M | FEMA |
| NY | DR-4020 | Schoharie County | $5M | FEMA |
| NY | DR-4031 | Schoharie County | $5M | FEMA |
| NY | DR-4020 | City of Amsterdam | 500,000 | FEMA |
| NY | DR-4031 | City of Amsterdam | 500,000 | FEMA |
| NY | DR-4020 | Walter Elmwood Museum | $700,000 | FEMA |
| NY | DR-4031 | Walter Elmwood Museum | $300,000 | FEMA |
| NY | DR-4020 | NYS State DOT | $10M | FEMA, FHWA-ER |
| NY | DR-4031 | NYS State DOT | $15M | FEMA, FHWA-ER |
| NY | DR-4020 | Town of New City | $12M | FEMA |
| NY | DR-4085 | Catholic Health Services | $7M | FEMA |
| NY | DR-4085 | New York City OMB | $100B | FEMA, FHWA-ER, FTA-ER, NYCHA |
| NY | DR-4085 | New York City DOT | $10B | FEMA, FHWA-ER, FTA-ER |
| NY | DR-4085 | New York City DEP | $30B | FEMA |
| NY | DR-4085 | New York City DOC | $10M | FEMA |
| NY | DR-4085 | Staten Island Ferry (SIF) | $350M | FEMA, FTA-ER |
| NY | DR-4085 | Governor’s Office of Storm Recovery | $100M | CDBG-DR, FEMA PA Match |
| NY | DR-4085 | Nassau County | $1.6B | FEMA, CDBG-DR |
| NY | DR-4085 | FEMA - Hurricane Sandy | $13.5B | FEMA |
| NY | DR-1710 | FEMA – Severe Storms & Coastal Flooding | $12M | FEMA |
| NY | DR-1692 | FEMA – Severe Storms & Inland Flooding | $83M | FEMA |
| NY | DR-4480 | Rensselaer County - COVID-19 | $60M | FEMA, HHS |
| NY | DR-4085 | PANYNJ | $5B | FEMA, FTA, FHWA |
| NJ | DR-4086 | PANYNJ | $5B | FEMA, FTA, FHWA |
| NJ | DR-4614 | Weehawken Township | $4M | FEMA |
| NJ | DR-4086 | Weehawken Township | $10M | FEMA |
| NJ | DR-4614 | West New York Township | $10M | FEMA |
| NJ | DR-4488 | West New York Township | $30M | FEMA, CARES |
| NJ | DR-4086 | NJ DEP | $3M | EPA, FEMA |
| NJ | DR-4086 | Town of North Brunswick | $2M | FEMA |
| NJ | DR-4086 | Lincoln Harbor Fire Department | $500,000 | FEMA |
| NJ | DR-4086 | Middlesex County | $2M | FEMA |
| NJ | DR-4086 | Hoboken BOE | $1M | FEMA |
| NJ | DR-4086 | Town of Secaucus | $750,000 | FEMA |
| FL | DR-4283 | University of Florida | $10M | FEMA |
| FL | DR-4283 | St. John’s City Airport | $5M | FEMA |
| FL | DR-4283 | St. John’s County | $500M | FEMA |
| FL | DR-4673 | Gasparilla Island Water Authority | $25MM | FEMA |
| SC | DR-4241 | City of Sumter | $6M | FEMA |
| SC | DR-4286 | East Richland City PSD | $12M | FEMA |
| MS | DR-1604 | Jackson County | $250M | FEMA |

***Figure 2****: A snapshot of GCC’s disaster recovery experience*

**ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE:**

Our proposed project team is meticulously structured to address the comprehensive scope of services requested by the City in the RFP for disaster cost recovery services. Led by **Jeff Abraham, MBA, CCRP**, our Principal-in-Charge, the team is tailored to oversee disaster recovery projects from inception to execution, manage key stakeholder engagements, and ensure efficient mentorship and direction of project staff. Jeff, along with designated Project Manager/FEMA SME **Eric Zabukovec**, will serve as the main points of contact, facilitating essential communication and coordination between the City of Santa Cruz, FEMA, Cal OES, and all other project stakeholders.

Supporting this leadership, **Jon Berquist, MBA**, our Disaster Recovery SME, will provide specialized disaster recovery support, focusing on FEMA 404 expertise when needed. **Josh Milner, MA**, our Debris SME, will contribute his deep knowledge in debris-related operations, ensuring compliance and advising on best practices for debris removal and permanent repairs. **Pat Geelan, PE**, as the Technical Advisor, will oversee all technical aspects related to disaster management and recovery processes. Furthermore, our team has access to an extensive network of professionals, allowing us to swiftly mobilize additional specialized skills and certifications whenever required, ensuring robust support for the recovery efforts of Santa Cruz. This ensemble of experts is equipped to handle everything from project tracking, critical documentation, virtual and on-site meetings, to the creation of FEMA required worksheets and grant management, ensuring all project requirements are meticulously met and documented for audit purposes, as outlined in the scope of services. For detailed information regarding our proposed organizational chart, team member resumes, availability, and other team-related details, please refer to Section 4.

**SUBCONSULTANTS AND SUBCONTRACTORS:**

Since 2015, **GrantCity Consulting, LLC (Prime Contractor)** and **Berquist Recovery Consulting (Subcontractor)** have been teaming together on various projects, working collaboratively to leverage our unique strengths. This strategic partnership enhances our collective ability to offer clients unparalleled service, support, and competitive rates. By combining our expertise and resources, we ensure that our clients receive the most comprehensive and effective solutions available in the market, distinctly positioning us ahead of the competition. This collaboration underscores our commitment to excellence and our dedication to delivering superior outcomes for all stakeholders involved in the disaster recovery process.

**A logo for a company

Description automatically generatedGRANTCITY CONSULTING, LLC.** GrantCity Consulting, LLC is a distinguished professional services firm specializing in disaster-related project, program, and grants management services across public and private sectors. Jeff Abraham, President and Operator, is a masterful project manager renowned for his adeptness in planning, executing, and concluding projects of varied scale and complexity. With a career marked by leadership in numerous federal, state, and local government engagements, as well as significant construction projects in the private sector, Mr. Abraham brings a wealth of experience to the table.

His extensive background in construction management, disaster recovery, emergency management, finance, and compliance management uniquely qualifies him to lead and innovate in the grants management arena. Having worked on over 30 presidentially declared disasters, Mr. Abraham has demonstrated unparalleled expertise in assisting applicants to navigate, secure, and manage grants from a myriad of federal, state, and local entities. His proactive approach and deep commitment to community recovery have been instrumental in helping clients overcome complex challenges and achieve substantial recovery milestones.

As we extend our services to the City of Santa Cruz, we are confident that Mr. Abraham's leadership will ensure expedited program management, reduced delivery costs, and consistently high-quality deliverables. His proven track record and passion for aiding community recovery efforts make him the ideal candidate to oversee and manage all aspects of disaster recovery for the City of Santa Cruz. With Mr. Abraham at the helm, GrantCity Consulting, LLC is committed to delivering exceptional service and support, driving recovery efforts that rebuild and strengthen communities.

**BERQUIST RECOVERY CONSULTING LLC. (BRC)** is a professional services firm providing project and program management, and disaster management services to public agencies and private sector clients.

Since its founding in 2012, Berquist Recovery Consulting (BRC) has been a committed partner to a diverse range of clients including state, local, tribal, and territorial governments, healthcare facilities, educational institutions, and non-profits, among others. Specializing in disaster preparation, response, recovery, mitigation, and appeals, BRC ensures communities are well-prepared and supported throughout every phase of disaster management.

BRC's approach combines best practices in disaster operations with grant funding expertise, facilitating efficient recovery and mitigating the potential loss of life and property damage. The firm's services are comprehensive, covering everything from debris management plans and direct administrative cost recovery to complex appeals and arbitration processes. Notably, BRC has proven success in navigating the intricate FEMA Public Assistance funding and reimbursement processes, reducing frustration and maximizing financial recovery for public entities impacted by disasters.

With a record of securing essential funding across the United States, BRC's disaster recovery teams help communities overcome the physical, emotional, and financial challenges posed by unexpected events. Their support extends beyond immediate disaster response to include long-term recovery planning and policy advice, ensuring communities are not only restored but also better prepared for future risks. Whether dealing with pandemic response, natural disasters, or infrastructure recovery, BRC stands as a trusted advisor and an effective advocate for its clients, promising more funding with less frustration.

**CITY SERVICES HISTORY:**

GrantCity Consulting, LLC has not performed services for the City within the last three years. As such, there are no past engagements or projects to list that involve the City during this period. However, we are eager to begin our relationship with the City and demonstrate our commitment and expertise in disaster recovery and management, building a new history of successful collaborations.