



City of Clearwater  
Procurement

Jay Ravins, Department Director  
100 South Myrtle Avenue, Clearwater, FL 33756

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[CHERRY BEKAERT] RESPONSE DOCUMENT REPORT

RFP No. 32-25

Professional Auditing Services

RESPONSE DEADLINE: May 28, 2025 at 10:00 am

Report Generated: Wednesday, May 28, 2025

Cherry Bekaert Response

CONTACT INFORMATION

**Company:**

Cherry Bekaert

**Email:**

lstrope@cbh.com

**Contact:**

Lauren Strobe

**Address:**

401 East Jackson Street  
Suite 1200  
Tampa, FL 33602

**Phone:**

(813) 251-1010

**Website:**

[www.cbh.com](http://www.cbh.com)

**Submission Date:**

May 27, 2025 2:23 PM (Eastern Time)

## ADDENDA CONFIRMATION

*No addenda issued*

## QUESTIONNAIRE

### 1. Exceptions\*

Proposers shall indicate any and all exceptions taken to the provisions or specifications in this solicitation document. Exceptions that surface elsewhere and that do not also appear under this section shall be considered invalid and void and of no contractual significance.

Do you have any exceptions to the provisions or specifications?

Yes

EXCEPTIONS TAKEN\*

**\*\*Special Note – Any material exceptions taken to the City's Terms and Conditions may render a Proposal non-responsive.**

Upload a copy of any exceptions taken to the provisions or specifications in this solicitation.

Exceptions\_Cherry\_Bekaert.pdf

### 2. Additional Materials\*

Have you included any additional materials?

No

### 3. Certified Business\*

Are you a Certified Small Business or a Certified Minority, Woman or Disadvantaged Business Enterprise?

No

#### **4. Vendor Certification\***

By submitting this response, the Vendor hereby certifies that:

- A. It is under no legal prohibition on contracting with the City of Clearwater.
- B. It has read, understands, and is in compliance with the specifications, terms and conditions stated herein, as well as its attachments, and any referenced documents.
- C. It has no known, undisclosed conflicts of interest.
- D. The prices offered were independently developed without consultation or collusion with any of the other vendors or potential vendors or any other anti-competitive practices.
- E. No offer of gifts, payments or other consideration were made to any City employee, officer, elected official, or consultant who has or may have had a role in the procurement process for the commodities or services covered by this contract. The Vendor has not influenced or attempted to influence any City employee, officer, elected official, or consultant in connection with the award of this contract.
- F. It understands the City may copy all parts of this response, including without limitation any documents or materials copyrighted by the Vendor, for internal use in evaluating respondent's offer, or in response to a public records request under Florida's public records law (F.S. Chapter 119) or other applicable law, subpoena, or other judicial process; provided that the City agrees not to change or delete any copyright or proprietary notices.
- G. It hereby warrants to the City that the Vendor and its subcontractors will comply with, and are contractually obligated to comply with, all federal, state, and local laws, rules, regulations, and executive orders.
- H. It certifies that Vendor is not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, voluntarily excluded, or disqualified from participation in this matter from any federal, state, or local agency.
- I. It will provide the commodities or services specified in compliance with all federal, state, and local laws, rules, regulations, and executive orders if awarded by the City.
- J. It is current in all obligations due to the City.

- K. It will accept all terms and conditions as set forth in this solicitation if awarded by the City.
- L. The signatory is an officer or duly authorized representative of the Vendor with full power and authority to submit binding offers and enter into contracts for the commodities or services as specified herein.

Confirmed

**5. E-Verify System Certification\***

***PER FLORIDA STATUTE 448.095, CONTRACTORS AND SUBCONTRACTORS MUST REGISTER WITH AND USE THE E-VERIFY SYSTEM TO VERIFY THE WORK AUTHORIZATION STATUS OF ALL NEWLY HIRED EMPLOYEES.***

The affiant, by virtue of confirming below, certifies that:

- A. The Contractor and its Subcontractors are aware of the requirements of Florida Statute 448.095.
- B. The Contractor and its Subcontractors are registered with and using the E-Verify system to verify the work authorization status of newly hired employees.
- C. The Contractor will not enter into a contract with any Subcontractor unless each party to the contract registers with and uses the E-Verify system.
- D. The Subcontractor will provide the Contractor with an affidavit stating that the Subcontractor does not employ, contract with, or subcontract with unauthorized alien.
- E. The Contractor must maintain a copy of such affidavit.
- F. The City may terminate this Contract on the good faith belief that the Contractor or its Subcontractors knowingly violated Florida Statutes 448.09(1) or 448.095(2)(c).
- G. If this Contract is terminated pursuant to Florida Statute 448.095(2)(c), the Contractor may not be awarded a public contract for at least 1 year after the date on which this Contract was terminated.
- H. The Contractor is liable for any additional cost incurred by the City as a result of the termination of this Contract.

Confirmed



**6. Vendor's Proposal\***

Upload a copy of your proposal with the information requested as detailed in the solicitation titled 32-25 Professional Auditing Services.

Cherry\_Bekaert\_Proposal\_Response\_to\_RFP\_32-25.pdf

**7. Scrutinized Company Certification\***

Please download the below documents, complete, and upload.

- [SCRUTINIZED COMPANIES AND B...](#)

Scrutinized\_Company\_Certification\_Cherry\_Bekaert.pdf

**8. Compliance with Anti-Human Trafficking Laws\***

Please download the below documents, complete, and upload.

- [Compliance with 787.06 form...](#)

Anti-Human\_Trafficking\_Cherry\_Bekaert.pdf

**9. W-9\***

Upload your current W-9 form. (available at  
<https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw9.pdf>)

W9\_Form\_Cherry\_Bekaert.pdf



Proposal for Professional Auditing Services

# City of Clearwater, Florida

May 28, 2025 | RFP #32-25

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**Lauren Strobe**

Partner, Cherry Bekaert LLP  
Partner, Cherry Bekaert Advisory LLC

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**Brian Liffick**

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[cbh.com](http://cbh.com)

# Contract Terms for Negotiation

As with any contractual relationship, Cherry Bekaert's desire to enter into a contract with the City is based on reaching a mutually positive negotiation of terms and conditions. After reviewing the RFP, we would like to offer some alternative language for your consideration.

RFP Section	Desired Exception/Revision
STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS 4.18 Remedies	<del>B. The City may purchase the services required under the Agreement from the open market, complete required work itself, or have it completed at the expense of Contractor. If the cost of obtaining substitute services exceeds the contract price, the City may recover the excess cost by: (i) requiring immediate reimbursement to the City; (ii) deduction from an unpaid balance due to Contractor; (iii) collection against the proposal and/or performance security, if any; (iv) collection against liquidated damages (if applicable); or (v) a combination of the aforementioned remedies or other remedies as provided by law. Costs includes any and all, fees, and expenses incurred in obtaining substitute services and expended in obtaining reimbursement, including, but not limited to, administrative expenses, attorneys' fees, and costs.</del>
STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS 4.20 Termination for Convenience	<del>The City</del> Each party reserves the right to terminate this Agreement at its convenience, in part or in whole, upon thirty (30) calendar days' written notice.
STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS 4.25 Indemnification/Liability	A. To the fullest extent permitted by law, Contractor agrees to defend, indemnify, and hold the City, its officers, agents, and employees, harmless from and against any and all <b>third party</b> liabilities, demands, claims, suits, losses, damages, causes of action, fines or judgments, including <b>reasonable</b> costs, attorneys', witnesses', and expert witnesses' fees, and expenses incident thereto, relating to, arising out of, or resulting from: (i) the services provided by Contractor personnel under this Agreement; (ii) any negligent acts, errors, mistakes or omissions by Contractor or Contractor personnel; and (iii) Contractor or Contractor personnel's <del>failure to comply with or fulfill the obligations established by</del> <b>breach of</b> this Agreement. If applicable, this paragraph shall be construed in harmony with F. S. § 725.06. <b>Provided, however, that the maximum aggregate liability of Contractor with respect to its liability obligations under the contract shall not exceed the sum of five million dollars (\$5,000,000.00).</b>

STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS 4.26 Warranty	Contractor warrants that the services and materials will conform to the requirements of the Agreement. Additionally, Contractor warrants that all services will be performed in a <del>good, workman-like, and professional manner</del> <b>accordance with professional standards</b> . The City's acceptance of service or materials provided by Contractor will not relieve Contractor from its obligations under this warranty. If any materials or services are of a substandard or unsatisfactory manner as determined by the City, Contractor, at no additional charge to the City, will provide materials or redo such services until in accordance with this Agreement and to the City's reasonable satisfaction. <del>Unless otherwise agreed, Contractor warrants that materials will be new, unused, of most current manufacture and not discontinued, will be free of defects in materials and workmanship, will be provided in accordance with manufacturer's standard warranty for at least one (1) year unless otherwise specified, and will perform in accordance with manufacturer's published specifications.</del> If applicable, this paragraph shall be construed in harmony with F. S. § 725.06.
STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS 4.32 Risk of Loss	Cherry Bekaert requests this clause be struck in its entirety.
STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS 4.42 Integration Clause	This Agreement, including all attachments and exhibits hereto <b>and the annual engagement letters between the parties</b> , supersede all prior oral or written agreements, if any, between the parties and constitutes the entire agreement between the parties with respect to the work to be performed.
5.4 Scope of Services WORKING PAPER RETENTION AND ACCESS TO WORKING PAPERS	In accordance with professional standards, Cherry Bekaert retains working papers for seven (7) years.





Proposal for Professional Auditing Services

# City of Clearwater, Florida

May 28, 2025 | RFP #32-25

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Partner, Cherry Bekaert LLP  
Partner, Cherry Bekaert Advisory LLC

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# TAB 1 - Letter of Transmittal and Independence

May 28, 2025

Lori Vogel, CPPB - Procurement Manager  
City of Clearwater, Florida  
600 Cleveland St.  
Clearwater, FL 33755

Dear Lori and Selection Committee Members:

Cherry Bekaert LLP (Cherry Bekaert or the Firm) thanks you for the opportunity to submit our proposal to serve City of Clearwater, Florida (the City) by providing Professional Audit Services. It would be our pleasure to serve the City; as one of the largest government audit firms in Florida, we bring a deep understanding of your needs through service to many of your peers. With Cherry Bekaert, the City will benefit from:

- ▶ Expertise and operational knowledge gained by serving nearly 200 public sector clients across the country, including 50+ government entities in the state of Florida.
- ▶ A team with the perfect combination of experience with the City of Clearwater and a fresh set of eyes on the audit.
- ▶ Technology solutions and process adaptations that facilitate collaboration, increase efficiency, and improve the precision of our substantive audit procedures.
- ▶ The scalability and capabilities of a large firm paired with an extensive Florida presence and commitment to service.

## Commitment to the City

We are fully committed to developing a trusted, mutually beneficial relationship with the City. When you work with us, you will receive committed support from a Firm who invests the time to understand you and deliver value added audit and attestation services. We are committed to being a trusted advisor and your “go to” for questions and concerns as they arise. Our client base and references demonstrate our long history of service and timeliness in meeting or exceeding client expectations. We regularly help Florida public sector clients:

- ▶ **Implement new Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statements** and maintain compliance with new/changing guidance. Your team includes a former GASB fellow.
- ▶ Ensure **on-time and compliant report completion** by incorporating robust pre-planning, significant interim work, technology solutions and proven government auditing procedures, making our audit process **efficient and easy-to-navigate**.
- ▶ **Assess regulatory changes through year-round discussion**, offering expertise and sharing lessons learned through compelling thought leadership and custom Continuing Professional Education (CPE) offerings, such as our Annual Government Seminar.
- ▶ **Improve efficiency** through comprehensive service plans, flexible auditing strategies, integrated IT/technology specialists and direct access/knowledge of your financial reporting and billing systems. We have direct experience with Tyler Munis.
- ▶ **Meet Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) certificate program award criteria** through high-quality Annual Comprehensive Financial Reports.

## Depth of Local & Industry Resources You Deserve

The City will have access to all of the resources of one of the largest CPA firms in the United States, while being served by a local team based in our Tampa and Orlando offices (Central Florida practice). Our team offers the City an unmatched depth of practical knowledge in the effective application of current standards. This includes the GASB, U.S. General Accounting Office's *Government Auditing Standards*, Title 2 U.S. *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 200, *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards* (Uniform Guidance), Chapter 10.550, Rules of the Auditor General and the Florida Statutes.

Our audit programs and processes are tailored specifically to your needs, streamlined through years of experience with Florida local governments. Our approach is highly automated and focused on proper planning. And in addition to traditional audit and compliance services, we provide bond offerings, performance audits, agreed-upon procedures, internal control reviews, information technology reviews, cyber security reviews and strategic management services. Furthermore, our team has helped many public sector clients smoothly transition to a new auditor. With extensive experience serving authorities, utilities, municipalities and state agencies throughout the state of Florida, we offer a critical mass of government experienced auditors and advisors and our Client Promise to build a mutually-beneficial relationship. Simply put, we are ready to start day one to provide the City an expert look to its external audit and business issues. We strongly believe that only Cherry Bekaert brings the capacity, capability, commitment and experience to provide a positive auditor transition, without interrupting the City's daily operations or increasing costs. We understand that local governments are facing more challenges and opportunities than ever. As the City Council decides whether or not to replace Duke Energy as the City's electricity provider, what to turn the main library into to provide citizens with a "destination experience", whether or not to sell City land, etc., we will be there. Our goal is to provide sound advice as events occur as opposed to simply performing the audit after the year ends.

## RFP Requirements

### ***A. The proposer's understanding of the work to be performed.***

Cherry Bekaert understands this engagement includes a Financial Statement Audit for the City and the Clearwater Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) for fiscal years ending September 30, 2025 through 2029. The audits will be performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, Uniform Guidance, the Florida Single Audit Act, Chapter 10.550 Rules of the Auditor General and the Florida Statutes. We understand the City is requesting an expression on the fair presentation of the City's individual non-major funds. Further, we will perform procedures over the Schedule of Revenues and Expenditures of Emergency Medical Services. We understand all of the service requirements expected in section 5.4 Scope of Services in the City's request for proposal 32-25.

### ***B. A positive commitment to perform the service within the time period specified.***

Cherry Bekaert is committed to performing the above services within the City's specified time period. We understand that the goal to issue the auditor's reports is no later than March 15th. We will work with the City to develop the schedule to achieve that deadline during our first meeting.



***C. An affirmative statement that the firm is independent of the City of Clearwater and any potential component units as defined by generally accepted auditing standards and the U.S. General Accounting Office's General Auditing Standards.***

Cherry Bekaert is independent of the City and all component units, in accordance with the Code of Professional Ethics of the AICPA and U.S. GAO's *Government Auditing Standards*, and will comply with all Federal, State and Local laws and regulations in the performance of this engagement. Our client independence is verified annually and monitored by our in-house counsel and our professional practices group during the annual evaluation of continuance of client relationships. Furthermore, we are not aware of any existing or potential relationships between Cherry Bekaert and the City or its employees that could impair our independence and objectivity. Prior to entering into an engagement for any professional services, including advisory services, we evaluate the implications of any proposed services to an attest client will have on independence, in fact and in appearance. In addition, all professional staff assigned to your engagement must reaffirm their independence prior to the conclusion of the engagement. We communicate to our clients all conclusions with respect to independence at the beginning and end of each engagement. Should the City engage us to perform audit services, we will always establish strict guidelines for what the firm can and cannot do under the applicable independence rules that apply to the industry and service; however, in most cases we are able to provide the level of service desired by our clients while maintaining strict independence.

***D. List and describe the firm's (or proposed subcontractors') professional relationships involving the City of Clearwater or any of its actual or potential component units for the past five (5) years, together with a statement explaining why such relationships do not constitute a conflict of interest relative to performing the audit.***

Cherry Bekaert is currently assisting the City in implementing GASB 101, *Compensated Absences*. We have ensured that all services provided do not constitute a conflict of interest under generally accepted auditing standards or *government auditing standards*. We confirm that there are no impairments to independence related to this service. Cherry Bekaert has not had any other professional relationships involving the City or any of its component units for the past five (5) years.

## Conclusion

This proposal provides detail about our approach and the team committed to serve you, but more importantly, it illustrates the unique ways in which the City will benefit from working with Cherry Bekaert. With your engagement team based in our Central Florida practice to serve you, paired with the deep bench strength of dedicated industry resources, we trust you will find Cherry Bekaert is your guide forward. Thank you again for this opportunity. If you have questions about this proposal or require additional information, please feel free to contact me directly as an authorized representative of the Firm.

Sincerely,



**Lauren Strobe**  
Partner, Cherry Bekaert LLP  
Partner, Cherry Bekaert Advisory LLC  
P: 813.251.1010  
E: [lstrobe@cbh.com](mailto:lstrobe@cbh.com)



**Brian Liffick**  
Partner, Cherry Bekaert LLP  
Partner, Cherry Bekaert Advisory LLC  
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# TAB 2 – Qualifications, Experience and Project Personnel Expertise

## Firm Qualifications and Experience

*A. The proposal should indicate the total number of employees of the firm, the number of employees considered to be governmental audit staff, the location of the office from which the work on this engagement is to be performed, the number and nature of the professional staff to be employed in this engagement on a full-time basis, and the number and nature of the staff to be employed on a part-time basis.*

### Firm Size

Headquartered in Raleigh, North Carolina, Cherry Bekaert serves clients across industries in all 50 U.S. states and internationally. We have 40 offices with more than 2,500 associates.

Ranked among the largest assurance, tax and advisory firms in the U.S., Cherry Bekaert provides guidance and support that helps our clients move forward to reach their organizational goals. “Cherry Bekaert” is the brand name under which Cherry Bekaert LLP and Cherry Bekaert Advisory LLC, independently owned entities, provide professional services in an alternative practice structure in accordance with applicable professional standards. Cherry Bekaert Advisory LLC is not a licensed CPA firm. Cherry Bekaert LLP is a licensed CPA firm that provides attest services, and Cherry Bekaert Advisory LLC and its subsidiary entities provide business advisory and non-attest services spanning the areas of transaction advisory, risk and accounting advisory, digital solutions, cybersecurity and tax. We exercise a deliberate curiosity to know our clients’ industries and work collaboratively to create shared success. For more details, visit

[cbh.com/disclosure](http://cbh.com/disclosure).

For more than 75 years, clients have relied on Cherry Bekaert to guide them forward. We provide digitally-driven, industry-aligned advisory, assurance and tax services, leveraging practical knowledge and proven experience to help clients meet their financial, operational, regulatory and strategic goals and objectives. With multidisciplinary industry practices, Cherry Bekaert offers the full range of accounting and advisory services you would expect from a Big 4 firm, tailored to local governmental organizations. **Clients choose us because we understand their unique challenges and growth opportunities, and afford them with the depth of knowledge, resources, experience and dedication to service they need.**

Our experienced professionals know how to apply the best practices of accounting and business to the City, and can offer guidance through rapid growth and times of accelerated change. Let us be **Your Guide Forward** by delivering on our commitments to superior client service through:

- ▶ **Attention to Detail and Quality:** Outstanding service qualifications amplified by our commitment to prioritize your business and provide practical and timely support
- ▶ **Efficient, Business-Practical Guidance:** High levels of senior level involvement, continuity of service professionals and expertise on a year-round basis
- ▶ **Value-Driven Relationships:** Streamlined, focused attention on your strategic, operational and financial objectives

<p><b>\$660M</b> CY2024 Net Fees</p>		<p><b>2500+</b> Employees Firmwide</p>	<p><b>190+</b> Partners</p>
<p><b>40+</b> Offices Serving Clients Across the U.S. and Internationally</p>	<p><b>75+</b> Years in Business</p>	<p><b>Ranked a Top U.S. Accounting Firm</b> by Accounting Today and Inside Public Accounting</p> <p>Member of <b>Allinial Global</b>, the 2nd largest accounting and consulting association in the world, represented by over 268 member firms in 109 countries with a combined revenue of <b>\$6B+</b></p>	



### Size of Government Audit Staff

Cherry Bekaert's Government & Public Sector (GPS) Group has approximately 200 professionals who focus on providing assurance services to nearly 200 governmental entities.

### Office Location

Our Contral Florida Practice with offices in Tampa and Orlando will be the primary locations serving you. As needed, we will draw upon the resources of our other offices to best serve the City. By design, our local and firm-wide teams work in partnership to deliver all services.

401 East Jackson Street, Suite 1200  
Tampa, FL 33602

300 S Orange Ave, Ste 1000  
Orlando, FL 32801

### Number & Nature of Staff

Overall, we anticipate providing 2 partners (Audit & IT), 1 senior manager, 1 manager, and 3 senior associates/associates on a full-time basis, as well as 1 partner (concurring reviewer) on a part-time basis, to complete the City's audit services. We also have assigned 3 additional resources to your proposed engagement team, including 1 partner and 2 directors, available to help the City address a variety of challenges as they arise.

***B. If the proposal is submitted by a joint venture or consortium, the qualifications of each firm comprising the joint venture or consortium should be separately identified and the firm that is to serve as the principal auditor should be noted, if applicable.***

Cherry Bekaert is not a joint venture or consortium.

***C. The firm is also required to submit a copy of the report on its most recent external quality control review, with a statement whether that quality control review included a review of specific governmental engagements.***

Cherry Bekaert has passed, without exception, 15 consecutive peer reviews conducted under the auspices of the AICPA. A copy of our most recent peer review report as well as the acceptance letter from the AICPA are included below. The review included a number of specific engagements for which Single Audit and Government Auditing Standards apply (specific governmental engagements).

The Firm is a member of the AICPA's SEC Practice Section and Private Companies Practice Section (PCPS) of the Division for CPA Firms and practices under the AICPA-recognized quality control program. Selected Firm professionals are approved by the AICPA to perform peer review, quality assurance review and consulting review of other CPA firms' quality assurance programs. Firm leaders and partners in charge of industry practice areas maintain vital links to policy-making bodies in public accounting. Our personnel committee assignments and industry associations include (but are not limited to):

- ▶ Accounting Standards Executive Committee
- ▶ AICPA Professional Ethics Committee
- ▶ AICPA Auditing Standards Organization
- ▶ AICPA Accounting and Review Services Committee
- ▶ AICPA Technical Issues Committee, Private Companies Practice Section
- ▶ AICPA Tax Division and its Individual Taxation Subcommittee
- ▶ AICPA SEC Practice Section Executive Committee
- ▶ AICPA Accounting Practice Committee

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[www.eisneramper.com](http://www.eisneramper.com)**Report on the Firm's System of Quality Control**

November 29, 2022

To the Partners of Cherry Bekaert LLP and the National Peer Review Committee

We have reviewed the system of quality control for the accounting and auditing practice of Cherry Bekaert LLP (the firm) applicable to engagements not subject to PCAOB permanent inspection in effect for the year ended April 30, 2022. Our peer review was conducted in accordance with the Standards for Performing and Reporting on Peer Reviews established by the Peer Review Board of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (Standards).

A summary of the nature, objectives, scope, limitations of, and the procedures performed in a system review as described in the Standards may be found at [www.aicpa.org/prsummary](http://www.aicpa.org/prsummary). The summary also includes an explanation of how engagements identified as not performed or reported on in conformity with applicable professional standards, if any, are evaluated by a peer reviewer to determine a peer review rating.

**Firm's Responsibility**

The firm is responsible for designing and complying with a system of quality control to provide the firm with reasonable assurance of performing and reporting in conformity with the requirements of applicable professional standards in all material respects. The firm is also responsible for evaluating actions to promptly remediate engagements deemed as not performed or reported on in conformity with the requirements of applicable professional standards, when appropriate, and for remediating weaknesses in its system of quality control, if any.

**Peer Reviewer's Responsibility**

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the design of and compliance with the firm's system of quality control based on our review.

**Required Selections and Considerations**

Engagements selected for review included engagements performed under Government Auditing Standards, including compliance audits under the Single Audit Act; audits of employee benefit plans; an audit performed under FDICIA; and an examination of service organizations (SOC 2 engagement).

As a part of our peer review, we considered reviews by regulatory entities as communicated by the firm, if applicable, in determining the nature and extent of our procedures.

**Opinion**

In our opinion, the system of quality control for the accounting and auditing practice of Cherry Bekaert LLP applicable to engagements not subject to PCAOB permanent inspection in effect for the year ended April 30, 2022, has been suitably designed and complied with to provide the firm with reasonable assurance of performing and reporting in conformity with applicable professional standards in all material respects. Firms can receive a rating of pass, pass with deficiency(ies), or fail. Cherry Bekaert LLP has received a peer review rating of pass.

EisnerAmper LLP  
Iselin, New Jersey

"EisnerAmper" is the brand name under which EisnerAmper LLP and Eisner Advisory Group LLC provide professional services. EisnerAmper LLP and Eisner Advisory Group LLC are independently owned firms that practice in an alternative practice structure in accordance with the AICPA Code of Professional Conduct and applicable law, regulations and professional standards. EisnerAmper LLP is a licensed CPA firm that provides attest services, and Eisner Advisory Group LLC and its subsidiary entities provide tax and business consulting services. Eisner Advisory Group LLC and its subsidiary entities are not licensed CPA firms.





National Peer  
Review Committee

December 16, 2022

Michelle Thompson  
Cherry Bekaert LLP  
3800 Glenwood Ave Ste 200  
Raleigh, NC 27612-5532

Dear Michelle Thompson:

It is my pleasure to notify you that on December 16, 2022, the National Peer Review Committee accepted the report on the most recent System Review of your firm. The due date for your next review is October 31, 2025. This is the date by which all review documents should be completed and submitted to the administering entity.

As you know, the report had a peer review rating of pass. The Committee asked me to convey its congratulations to the firm.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,



Michael Wagner  
Chair, National PRC

+1.919.402.4502

cc: Marc Fogarty, Steven Siegel

Firm Number: 900010011816

Review Number: 594133

***D. The firm shall also provide information on the results of any federal or state desk reviews or field reviews of its audits during the past three (3) years. In addition, the firm shall provide information on the circumstances and status of any disciplinary actions taken or pending against the firm during the past three (3) years with the state regulatory bodies or professional organizations.***

As a major provider of government auditing services, Cherry Bekaert has been periodically subjected to federal or state/local desk reviews or field reviews of audits during the past three (3) years. The results of such reviews have been positive, with “pass” results on every occasion.

In addition, we distinguish ourselves by the quality and accuracy of the work we perform. As a large professional services firm, Cherry Bekaert and its partners and employees are subject to occasional regulatory matters. There has been no disciplinary action taken or pending against the firm by a state regulatory body or professional organization within the past three years that will affect our ability to perform the requested services.

### **Partners, Supervisory, and Staff Qualifications and Experience.**

***A. The firm should identify the principal supervisory and management staff, including engagement partners, managers, single audit staff, and other supervisors and specialists, who would be assigned to the engagement and indicate whether each such person is licensed to practice as a certified public accountant in Florida. The firm also should provide information on the governmental auditing experience of each person, including information on relevant continuing professional education for the past three (3) years and membership in professional organizations relevant to the performance of this audit.***

#### **Team Qualifications**

The Cherry Bekaert team responsible for the City's account brings specialized knowledge in the unique accounting, auditing and compliance issues you face. Each engagement team is handpicked for alignment with the special needs and considerations of clients like the City. Your team members have experience with Florida cities and the particular requirements of cities located in Pinellas County. We commit to providing timely and helpful responses to time sensitive questions; your engagement team is available to you year-round. We ensure frequent and direct access to the partners, directors and managers who maintain responsibility for the engagement, employing a high ratio of partners and senior managers to staff. This allows the Firm to staff and supervise engagements with a higher level of experienced staff than most firms.

#### **Continuing Professional Education**

The field of governmental accounting and fiscal management is dynamic for both the City and its external consultants. Pronouncements from the following bodies all have significant impact on this sector:

- ▶ Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB) (altering internal accounting and external reporting)
- ▶ AICPA (modifying audit standards and procedures)
- ▶ OMB (creating new compliance demands associated with the expenditure of federal funds)
- ▶ Florida Rules of the Auditor General (addressing Florida specific statutes and requirements)

We consider the training of our professionals to be extremely important to best meet the evolving needs of our profession and provide the highest quality of service to our clients.

We believe that to consistently offer our clients the most current information, continuing education of our personnel is a mission-critical objective. It is the policy of Cherry Bekaert that all professional personnel:

- ▶ Comply with the continuing professional education requirements of the AICPA, the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission Practice Section (SECPS) of the AICPA Division for Firms, the appropriate state boards of accountancy, the U.S. Government Accountability Office, Yellow Book requirements and other regulatory agencies as applicable
- ▶ Maintain an adequate awareness and understanding of current developments in technical literature
- ▶ Assist in the training and development of staff members under their supervision

We require that all client service professionals complete at least 20 hours of qualifying Continuing Professional Education (CPE) every year and at least 120 hours every three (3) years. In addition, all client service professionals who serve governmental entities are required to complete 80 hours of CPE every two (2) years with at least 24 hours in subjects that directly relate to government auditing and/or the government environment. CPE is obtained through various sources, including AICPA, national and state Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) conferences, state society of Certified Public Accountant (CPA) industry conferences and webinars, other industry conferences and internally provided seminars and webinars. **All proposed service team members have more than 40 hours of relevant continuing education during each of the last three years, including the continuing education required by Government Auditing Standards.** Government-specific CPE courses that our professionals have taken over the last five years, in addition to speaking engagements to provide CPE for various organizations, include the following:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| ▶ AICPA Clarity Standards  | ▶ Common Frauds in Governmental Entities                              |
| ▶ AICPA Peer Review Update for Government  | ▶ Government Risk Assessment  |
| ▶ AICPA GAQC Courses   | ▶ Grant Administration Controls and Fraud Risks                       |
| ▶ Yellow Book Independence & Quality Control   | ▶ Governmental Entities and Cyber Frauds                              |
| ▶ Yellow Book Update   | ▶ Government Benefits Fraud   |
| ▶ Government ACFR Preparation  | ▶ Audits of State and Local Governments                               |
| ▶ Annual GASB Updates  | ▶ Assets and Liabilities of State and Local Governments               |
| ▶ Deep Dive into GASB 77, 79, 80 and 87  | ▶ Cash Flows in a Government Environment                              |
| ▶ GASB 72, Fair Value Accounting   | ▶ Local Government Accountability Update                              |
| ▶ GASB 84, Fiduciary Activities  | ▶ Auditing OPEB   |
| ▶ GASB 87, Leases  | ▶ Auditing Significant Estimates                                      |
| ▶ GASB 94, Public Private and Public-Public Partnerships and Availability Payment Arrangements | ▶ Final Pay, Reimbursements, & Other Paycheck Administration Pitfalls |
| ▶ GASB 96, Subscription-Based IT Arrangements  | ▶ Intermediate Government Accounting                                  |
| ▶ Navigating GASB 101  | ▶ GAQC Single Audit Roundtable  |
| ▶ Annual GFOA GASB Updates   | ▶ Single Audit Fundamentals   |
| ▶ GASB Lease Changes   | ▶ Uniform Guidance requirements                                       |
| ▶ GASB Other Postemployment Benefits (OPEB)  | ▶ Reporting in a Single Audit   |
| ▶ SAS 135  | ▶ Testing Internal Controls in a Single Audit                         |
| ▶ National/State GFOA Annual Conferences   | ▶ Single Audit Compliance Supplement Update                           |
| ▶ GASB Conceptual Framework: Disclosures   |   |



- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Internal Control Considerations-Focus on Non-profits and Governmental Entities</li> <li>▶ LeaseCrunch: Functionality and Reporting Overview</li> <li>▶ Future Technology for Governmental Accounting/Finance Department</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Subrecipient Monitoring Under Uniform Guidance</li> <li>▶ Sampling for Single Audit</li> <li>▶ Coronavirus Relief Funds - Financial and Single Audit Considerations</li> <li>▶ <i>Note that CPE taken by team member can be provided upon request</i></li> </ul> |
|---|---|

## Account Management

The City deserves responsiveness, quick turnaround time, efficient management and the benefit of our professionals' experience applied and leveraged on your behalf. We use a "relationship partner" concept to maintain continuity of service over time and a proactive understanding of your business and service needs. Having a relationship partner means that one person is ultimately responsible for all aspects of all services provided to the City. The relationship partner has the overall responsibility for coordinating all services and ensuring that the City receives timely and innovative support and that your expectations are met or exceeded. The relationship partner can make decisions on the spot and call upon the resources of the Firm to meet the special needs of each client. Lauren Strobe will serve as relationship partner for the City. In addition to ensuring service quality and consistency, involvement of a relationship partner:

- ▶ Improves the effectiveness of the process and ensures compliance with our quality assurance system
- ▶ Integrates expertise and, through active participation and observations, allows us to identify opportunities to consult you on industry-related issues

The entire engagement team that serves the City will work together to share information, documents and what we all know about your business and service needs (goals, other relationships, delivery expectations, etc.). We will have periodic meetings with you to hear about your business and learn from them. This approach promotes stability by effectively sharing knowledge and collaboratively developing engagement solutions, including timelines, standard checklists and involving specialized resources.

## Key Engagement Members

Name & Title	Role
Lauren Strobe - Partner	Lead Engagement/Audit Partner/Relationship Partner
Brian Liffick - Partner	Audit Quality Review Partner
Neal Beggan - Partner	IT Partner
Richard Crawford - Senior Manager	Audit Senior Manager
Justin Conley - Manager	Audit Manager
Matt Carr - Senior Associate	Audit Senior
Jack Ugalde - Senior Associate	Audit Senior
Sarah Jenkins - Associate	Audit Staff
Danny Martinez - Partner	Technical Resource
Jeff Zeichner - Director	Technical Resource
Scott Anderson - Director	Technical Resource

Please see below for detailed biographies.



## Lauren Strobe

Partner, Cherry Bekaert LLP

Partner, Cherry Bekaert Advisory LLC

**Assurance Services**

CPA: Florida - AC46145, Virginia - 53858

Lauren Strobe is an Assurance Partner specializing in audit services to local governments. Lauren focuses on financial reports, identification of key audit areas, compliance audits, testing design of key accounts and transaction cycles, and supervision of engagement teams. To further her expertise in financial reporting, Lauren volunteers as a GFOA Annual Report reviewer. Many of the government audits she has participated in have received the GFOA's Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting. Lauren is an instructor for Firm-sponsored trainings and has taught upper-level financial accounting courses for the University of South Florida – Sarasota Manatee Campus. She is also a past chair and board member of the Accounting Circle and a board member of the Advisory Council of the Lynn Pippenger School of Accountancy, University of South Florida. She was a member of the Tampa Connection class of 2017-2018. She is active in the FICPA and FGFOA organizations, serving on the FICPA State and Local Government Committee and Women in Leadership Committee and the FGFOA's Member & Leadership Development Committee. Lauren has more than 40 hours of relevant continuing education during each of the last four years, including the continuing education required by *Government Auditing Standards*.

## Education

B.S. and MAcc in Accounting, University of South Florida

## Focus Areas

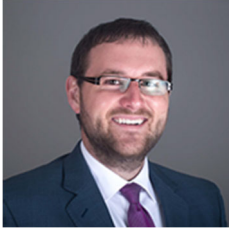
- ▶ Accounting Services
- ▶ Audit & Attestation Services
- ▶ Lease Accounting Services
- ▶ Revenue Recognition

## Professional & Civic Involvement

- ▶ American Institute of Certified Public Accountants
- ▶ Member, Florida Institute of Certified Public Accountants State and Local Government Committee and Women and Leadership Committee
- ▶ Government Finance Officers Association
- ▶ Former Member, Tampa Connection
- ▶ Member, Florida Government Finance Officers Association Leadership Development Committee
- ▶ Chair and Board Member, Accounting Circle
- ▶ Board Member, Advisory Council of the Lynn Pippenger School of Accountancy, University of South Florida

## Relevant Experience

- ▶ City of Clearwater, FL
- ▶ City of St. Petersburg, FL
- ▶ City of Pinellas Park, FL
- ▶ City of Vero Beach, FL
- ▶ City of Lake Buena Vista, FL
- ▶ City of Bay Lake, FL
- ▶ City of Charlotte, NC
- ▶ City of Alexandria, VA
- ▶ Charlotte County, FL
- ▶ Orange County, FL
- ▶ Monroe County, FL
- ▶ Hillsborough County, FL
- ▶ Miami-Dade Aviation Department, FL
- ▶ Miami-Dade Transit Department, FL
- ▶ Juvenile Welfare Board of Pinellas County, FL
- ▶ Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA), FL
- ▶ Hillsborough Area Regional Transit (HART), FL
- ▶ Brevard County, FL
- ▶ Columbia County, GA
- ▶ Forsyth County, NC



**Brian Liffick**

**Partner, Cherry Bekaert LLP**

**Partner, Cherry Bekaert Advisory LLC**

**Assurance Services**

CPA: Florida - AC51463

A Certified Public Accountant, Brian has over 15 years of experience in public accounting, primarily in the government and not-for-profit sectors, and has led audits for several large counties and cities in the State of Florida, numerous Florida governmental entities and various higher education and not-for-profit institutions. He has considerable background with audits of state and federal grant compliance, not-for-profit organizations, and audit services for numerous cities, counties, school boards, and other state and local government organizations. Brian has published industry articles on governmental, nonprofit and compliance matters and is a valued instructor and speaker for Firm-sponsored events. He is also an active participant in government and not-for-profit seminars, conventions and trainings where he has also served as a speaker annually. Brian has more than 40 hours of relevant continuing education during each of the last four years, including the continuing education required by *Government Auditing Standards*.

**Education**

B.A., Manchester College

**Professional & Civic Involvement**

- ▶ AICPA
- ▶ FICPA
- ▶ FGFOA
- ▶ GFOA
- ▶ Indiana CPA Society
- ▶ SACUBO

**Relevant Experience**

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| ▶ City of Lake Wales, FL                                | ▶ Collier County District School Board                            | ▶ Collier County District School Board, FL                                   |
| ▶ City of Port St. Lucie, FL                            | ▶ St. Johns County Public Schools                                 | ▶ Duval County District School Board, FL                                     |
| ▶ City of Stuart, FL                                    | ▶ Reedy Creek Improvement District, FL                            | ▶ Orange County Public Schools, FL   |
| ▶ City of Vero Beach, FL                                | ▶ Central Florida Tourism Oversight District                      | ▶ St. Johns County Public Schools, FL  |
| ▶ City of Bay Lake, FL                                  | ▶ Jacksonville Transportation Authority, FL                       | ▶ St. Lucie County District School Board, FL                                 |
| ▶ City of Lake Buena Vista, FL                          | ▶ International Drive Master Transit and Improvement District, FL | ▶ Volusia County District School Board, FL                                   |
| ▶ City of Frankfort, KY                                 | ▶ Enterprise Florida, Inc., FL                                    | ▶ Town of Eatonville, FL   |
| ▶ Brevard County, FL                                    | ▶ Florida Development Finance Corporation, FL                     | ▶ Town of Mooresville, NC  |
| ▶ Charlotte County, FL                                  | ▶ South Central Educational Risk Management Program, FL           | ▶ South Central Educational Risk Management Program                          |
| ▶ Monroe County, FL                                     |   | ▶ Clermont Police Officers' Pension Plan and Firefighters' Retirement System |
| ▶ Orange County, FL                                     |   |  |
| ▶ Orange County Library District                        |   |  |
| ▶ Orange County Educational Facilities Authority, FL    |   |  |
| ▶ Orange County Health Facilities Authority, FL         |   |  |
| ▶ Central Florida Regional Transit Authority (LYNX), FL |   |  |

**Neal Beggan****Partner, Cherry Bekaert Advisory LLC****Risk Advisory Services**

A Certified Information Systems Auditor (CISA), Certified in Risk and Information Systems Control (CRISC), Certified in Risk Management Assurance (CRMA), Certified CSF Practitioner (CCSFP) and one of the nation's first CMMC Provisional Assessors (CMMC-PA), Neal has over 20 years of audit, consulting and compliance experience, and has performed reviews in the following areas across a myriad of IT platforms: SOX 404, NIST 800-53/171, HIPPA/HITRUST, ISO 27001/2, FISCAM, GDPR, OMB A-130, and SOC 1/2/3.

Clients depend on Neal to identify key business and IT risks and recommend practical solutions to mitigate those risks, as well as to perform operational audits to identify cost savings and revenue opportunities. Neal has experience improving existing internal audit methodologies for large corporations, and leading corporate-wide training for clients and the Firm.

Prior to joining Cherry Bekaert, Neal worked at a regional accounting firm as an IT audit manager, as an IT audit senior with Ernst & Young's Technology and Security Risk Services practice, and as a consultant with KPMG's Risk Advisory practice.

**Education & Certifications**

BBA in Finance with a concentration in Computer Information Systems (CIS), James Madison University

Certified Information Systems Auditor (CISA)

Certified in Risk and Information Systems Control (CRISC)

Certification in Risk Management Assurance (CRMA)

Certified CSF Practitioner (CCSFP)

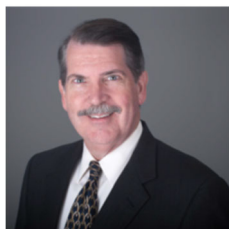
Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification (CMMC-PA)

**Focus Areas**

- |                                 |                            |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| ▶ SOX 404                       | ▶ Cybersecurity            |
| ▶ Governance, Risk & Compliance | ▶ IT Internal Controls     |
| ▶ Internal Audit                | ▶ Privacy                  |
| ▶ IT Audit & Consulting         | ▶ Risk Assessment Services |

**Professional & Civic Involvement**

- ▶ AICPA SOC for Supply Chain Committee Member
- ▶ Information Systems Audit and Control Association (ISACA)
- ▶ Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA)
- ▶ Board Member, Autism Society of America
- ▶ Executive Committee, Leukemia & Lymphoma Society
- ▶ School of Accounting Guiding Executive (SAGE) Board, James Madison University



**Richard Crawford**

**Senior Manager, Cherry Bekaert Advisory LLC**

**Audit Services**

CPA: Florida - AC47597

A Certified Public Accountant, Richard has nine years of public accounting experience with a strong focus on government services. He is a member of the Firm's Government Services Industry Group, and also leads our local office initiatives for use of Smartsheet, Idea and other automated audit tools.

As an audit manager, Richard focuses on financial reporting, identification of key audit areas, testing design of key accounts and transaction cycles and supervision of the engagement team. He will provide regular communication and will be responsible for planning, directing and reviewing performance of our work.

Richard has more than 40 hours of relevant continuing education during each of the last four years, including the continuing education required by *Government Auditing Standards*.

**Education**

M.B.A., University of Dallas

M.S.A., University of Central Florida

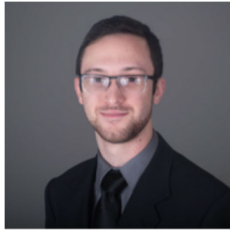
B.S., Texas A&M University

**Professional & Civic Involvement**

- ▶ American Institute of Certified Public Accountants
- ▶ Florida Institute of Certified Public Accountants
- ▶ Florida Government Finance Officers Association

**Relevant Experience**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| ▶ City of Stuart, FL                                 | ▶ Collier County District School Board, FL            |
| ▶ City of Vero Beach, FL                             | ▶ Duval County District School Board, FL              |
| ▶ Town of Eatonville, FL                             | ▶ Martin County District School Board, FL             |
| ▶ Orange County, FL                                  | ▶ Volusia County District School Board, FL            |
| ▶ Orange County Water Utilities System, FL           | ▶ Enterprise Florida, Inc., FL                        |
| ▶ Orange County Solid Waste System, FL               | ▶ ATU Local 1577 and 1596 Pension Plans, FL           |
| ▶ Orange County Convention Center, FL                | ▶ Boynton Beach General Employees Retirement Plan, FL |
| ▶ Orange County Health Facilities Authority, FL      | ▶ Palm Beach Gardens Pension Plans, FL                |
| ▶ Orange County Educational Facilities Authority, FL | ▶ Town of Jupiter Police Officers Pension Plan, FL    |
| ▶ Mecklenburg County, NC                             | ▶ South Miami Pension Plan, FL                        |
| ▶ Town of Stanley, NC                                | ▶ State of Florida                                    |



**Justin Conley**

**Manager, Cherry Bekaert Advisory LLC**

**Audit Services**

CPA: Florida - AC49398

Justin is a Certified Public Accountant with over five years of public accounting experience. Justin's public accounting experience includes a significant focus on audits of governmental entities, including employee benefit plans.

As an Audit Manager, Justin focuses on financial reports, reviewing contracts and statutes for relevant changes, testing key audit areas and transaction cycles, supervision of staff and emphasis of regular communication between the client and engagement team.

Justin has more than 40 hours of relevant continuing education during each of the last four years, including the continuing education required by *Government Auditing Standards*.

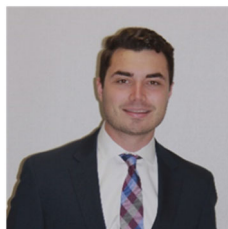
**Education & Certifications**

MBA, University of Central Florida

B.S., University of Central Florida

**Relevant Experience**

- ▶ City of Bay Lake, FL
- ▶ City of Lake Buena Vista, FL
- ▶ City of Titusville, FL
- ▶ City of Bay Lake, FL
- ▶ City of Lake Buena Vista, FL
- ▶ Reedy Creek Improvement District, FL
- ▶ ATU Local 1577 Pension Plan, FL
- ▶ ATU Local 1596 Pension Plan, FL
- ▶ Boynton Beach General Employee's Retirement System, FL
- ▶ Clermont Police Officers' Pension Plan, FL
- ▶ Clermont Firefighters' Retirement System, FL
- ▶ Fulton-Dekalb Hospital Authority Pension Plan, FL
- ▶ Palm Beach Gardens Police Officers' Pension Fund, FL
- ▶ Retirement System for the General Employees of the Utility Board for the City of Key West, FL
- ▶ Sarasota Firefighters' Insurance Trust Fund, FL
- ▶ Sunrise Firefighters' Retirement Plan, FL
- ▶ Town of Jupiter Police Officers' Retirement Fund, FL
- ▶ Brevard County, FL
- ▶ Charlotte County, FL
- ▶ Florida Development Finance Corporation, FL
- ▶ International Drive Master Transit and Improvement District, FL
- ▶ Orange County, FL
- ▶ Osceola County District School Board, FL
- ▶ State of Florida
- ▶ St. Johns County District School Board, FL
- ▶ St. Lucie County District School Board, FL
- ▶ Volusia County District School Board, FL

**Matthew Carr****Senior Associate, Cherry Bekaert Advisory LLC****Assurance Services**

Matt has over five years of public accounting experience serving the Firm's clients. He primarily provides audit services for government and not-for-profit clients. Matt has extensive experience conducting audit procedures and works closely with individuals to perform detail testing. Matt has been an integral resource in testing and reviewing compliance in relation to Uniform Guidance for many of our single audits, most of which receive FEMA assistance. As an Audit Senior, Matt focuses on financial reports, testing key audit areas and transaction cycles, supervision of staff and emphasis of regular communication between the client and engagement team.

Matt has more than 40 hours of relevant continuing education during each of the last four years, including the continuing education required by *Government Auditing Standards*.

**Education & Certifications**

M.S., Southern New Hampshire University

B.S., Florida State University

**Professional & Community Involvement**

- ▶ American Institute of Certified Public Accountants

**Relevant Experience**

- ▶ City of Bay Lake, FL
- ▶ City of Lake Buena Vista, FL
- ▶ Brevard County, FL
- ▶ CareerSource Broward
- ▶ Central Florida Tourism Oversight District
- ▶ Charlotte County, FL
- ▶ Enterprise Florida
- ▶ Florida Opportunity Fund
- ▶ Manatee County District School Board
- ▶ Orange County, FL
- ▶ Orange County Public Schools
- ▶ Retirement System for General Employees of the Utility Board of City of Key West, FL
- ▶ South Central Educational Risk Management
- ▶ State of Florida
- ▶ St. John's County District School Board
- ▶ Volusia County District School Board



**Jack Ugalde****Senior Associate, Cherry Bekaert Advisory LLC****Assurance Services**

Jack is an experienced senior auditor with expertise in auditing governmental entities, including Pinellas cities. He has provided clients with a wide-range of assurance services including financial statement audits, compliance audits, compilations, agreed-upon procedures, SOC reports and other services.

Jack has more than 40 hours of relevant continuing education during each of the last four years, including the continuing education required by *Government Auditing Standards*.

**Education**

B.S Accounting, University of South Florida

**Focus Areas**

- ▶ Single Audit
- ▶ GASB & GAAP
- ▶ ACFR Preparation

**Professional Involvement**

- ▶ Member, Florida Institute of Certified Public Accountants

**Relevant Experience**

- ▶ City of St. Petersburg, FL
- ▶ City of Pinellas Park, FL
- ▶ Sarasota County School District, FL
- ▶ School District of Manatee County, FL
- ▶ Norfolk Airport Authority, VA
- ▶ Peninsula Airport Commission, VA
- ▶ North Carolina Turnpike Authority, NC
- ▶ Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority, FL
- ▶ Hillsborough Area Rapid Transit Authority, FL



## **Sarah Jenkins**

**Associate, Cherry Bekaert Advisory LLC**

### **Assurance Services**

Sarah is an experienced associate auditor with over a year of expertise in auditing nonprofits and governmental entities. She has provided clients with a wide-range of assurance services including financial statement audits, compliance audits, compilations, agreed-upon procedures, and other services.

### **Education**

B.S Accounting, University of South Florida

### **Focus Areas**

- ▶ GASB & GAAP

### **Relevant Experience**

- ▶ City of St. Petersburg, FL
- ▶ Norfolk Airport Authority, VA
- ▶ YMCA of West Central Florida, FL
- ▶ North Carolina Turnpike Authority, NC



## **Danny Martinez**

**Partner, Cherry Bekaert Advisory LLC**

***Government & Public Sector Accounting Advisory Leader***

CPA: Texas - 114600

As a Partner at Cherry Bekaert, Danny provides advisory and training services to a wide range of governmental entities, including municipalities and their component units, counties, school districts, public universities, special districts, tribal governments, airports, ports and hospitals. He has provided technical accounting assistance to some of the largest cities and counties in the nation, including the implementation of GASB 87, 96, and 101. Danny and his team are currently working with the City to assist with the implementation of GASB 101. As the leader of the Government and Public Sector Accounting Advisory group, Danny is responsible for the quality and growth of the firm's GASB-as-a-Service, ACFR writing, and Surge Team accounting advisory services. Under his leadership, Cherry Bekaert has experienced significant growth in these services and achieved high client satisfaction and retention scores for Governmental Accounting Pronouncement Implementations. Danny's extensive experience is showcased through his presentations on various governmental industry and accounting topics at both national and regional conferences. He presented on GASB 101 implementations at last year's national GFOA conference and this year's National Association of State Controllers (NASC) conference. Danny ensures that clients receive top-tier guidance and support throughout the implementation process. He will be leading trainings for the City, bringing his wealth of knowledge and practical insights directly to your team.

Danny is the past Zone 3 (GASB) Chair of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) Technical Issues Committee, a group that provides a voice for its constituents in the standard-setting process. Additionally, Danny is a founding member of the firm's Government Standards Outlook Committee, a group of technical leaders who stay abreast of all upcoming GASB, OMB, and AICPA changes and provide comment letters to those bodies.

Danny has more than 40 hours of relevant continuing education during each of the last four years, including the continuing education required by *Government Auditing Standards*.

### **Education & Certifications**

B.S. in Accounting, University of Southern California

Certified Government Financial Manager (CGFM)

### **Focus Areas**

- ▶ GASB Technical Accounting Assistance
- ▶ Public Speaking and Training
- ▶ Governmental Accounting Pronouncement Implementation
- ▶ Process and Technology Accounting Transformation
- ▶ Strategic Accounting Projects
- ▶ Audit Preparation and Year-End Close Assistance
- ▶ ACFR or Financial Statement Writing or Refresh
- ▶ Surge Team Urgent Accounting Assistance

### **Professional & Civic Involvement**

- ▶ Past GASB Zone Chair, AICPA Technical Issues Committee
- ▶ Association of Governmental Accountants, Dallas and New Mexico Chapters



## Jeff Zeichner

Director, Cherry Bekaert Advisory LLC

Assurance Services

CPA: Florida - AC40690

As a Director in Cherry Bekaert's Assurance practice, Jeff leverages more than two decades of audit and attest services to help public sector entities, including large municipal and county governments, school districts, higher education institutions and public transportation agencies. Jeff has extensive experience working in public transportation and has served a number of large and complex transportation authorities, aviation authorities / departments, port authorities, and tolling agencies.

Prior to joining Cherry Bekaert, Jeff was a partner in a national public accounting firm, responsible for the audit quality of large and complex governmental entities. Jeff holistically serves governmental entities, providing value that goes beyond the scope of a financial statement audit.

Jeff has more than 40 hours of relevant continuing education during each of the last four years, including the continuing education required by *Government Auditing Standards*.

### Education

B.S. in Accounting, Richard Stockton College of New Jersey

B.A. in Management, Richard Stockton College of New Jersey

### Focus Areas

- ▶ Assurance Services
- ▶ Audit & Attestation Services
- ▶ Lease Accounting Services

### Professional & Civic Involvement

- ▶ American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA)
- ▶ Florida Institute of Certified Public Accountants (FICPA)
- ▶ Florida Government Finance Officers Association
- ▶ St. Augustine Rotary
- ▶ Stewardship Committee, Rotary District 6970
- ▶ Grant Administrator, Tarahumara Foundation

### Relevant Experience

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| ▶ Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, Washington, D.C. | ▶ University of North Carolina at Charlotte Investment Fund, NC                    | ▶ City of Jacksonville/Duval County, FL |
| ▶ Jacksonville Transportation Authority, FL                        | ▶ University of North Carolina at Charlotte Foundation, NC                         | ▶ City of St. Augustine Beach, FL       |
| ▶ Palm Tran, FL  | ▶ University of North Carolina at Charlotte Facilities Development Corporation, NC | ▶ Clay County, FL                       |
| ▶ Hillsborough County Aviation Authority, FL                       | ▶ University of Georgia Research Institute, GA                                     | ▶ Florida Turnpike System, FL           |
| ▶ Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport, FL              |  | ▶ Hillsborough County, FL               |
|  |  | ▶ Jacksonville Port Authority, FL       |

- ▶ Palm Beach International Airport, FL
- ▶ Jacksonville Aviation Authority, FL
- ▶ Northeast Florida Regional Aviation Authority, FL
- ▶ City of Tampa, FL
- ▶ City of Pinellas Park, FL
- ▶ City of Miami Beach, FL
- ▶ Augusta University Research Institute, GA
- ▶ Kennesaw State Research and Service Foundation, GA
- ▶ South Florida Water Management District, FL
- ▶ Baker County, FL
- ▶ Broward County, FL
- ▶ Canaveral Port Authority, FL
- ▶ City of Green Cove Springs, FL
- ▶ Kauai Department of Water, HI
- ▶ Martin County, FL
- ▶ Palm Beach County, FL
- ▶ St. Johns County, FL
- ▶ St. Johns County School District, FL
- ▶ Sumter County, FL
- ▶ Town of Callahan, FL

**Scott Anderson****Director, Cherry Bekaert Advisory LLC****Government & Public Sector Technical Director**

CPA: Florida- AC47907, North Carolina - 32398, Virginia- 53857

Scott, a licensed Certified Public Accountant in Florida, North Carolina, and Virginia, has been serving the Firm's clients since 2005. As the Firm's public sector Technical Director, he drives technical accounting training and thought leadership for the entire governmental practice. As a former GASB Practice Fellow, Scott was at the forefront of evolving standards, providing unique insights and access to future developments. His involvement in the standard-setting process has equipped him with vast experience in governmental accounting and financial reporting standards.

Scott advises clients and audit teams in all phases of auditing and financial reporting, overseeing engagement planning, performance of audit tests, report writing, and overall audit quality. His deep understanding of technical accounting and evolving standards enables him to guide teams effectively. He has extensive experience with Uniform Grant Guidance and the audit requirements for numerous states. Scott's expertise in audit methodology provides the consulting team with unique, forward-thinking strategies to ensure audit readiness in deliverables.

Scott has also instructed at numerous external conferences and seminars, representing both the firm and the GASB, and has conducted webinars sponsored by the Firm on various technical GASB topics. His professional involvement includes participation in committees and panels, such as the AICPA State and Local Government Experts Panel and the Government Finance Officers Association Special Review Committee.

Scott has more than 40 hours of relevant continuing education during each of the last four years, including the continuing education required by *Government Auditing Standards*.

**Education**

Master of Accounting, North Carolina State University

Bachelor of Arts, Utah State University

**Professional & Civic Involvement**

- ▶ American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA)
- ▶ AICPA State and Local Government Expert Panel Member
- ▶ North Carolina Association of Certified Public Accountants
- ▶ Government Finance Officers Association
- ▶ GFOA Special Review Committee
- ▶ GASB Practice Fellow Program
- ▶ Leadership Tampa Bay

***B. The firm should provide as much information as possible regarding the number, qualifications, experience, and training, including relevant continuing professional education, of the specified staff to be assigned to this engagement. The firm should indicate how the quality of staff over the term of the agreement will be assured.***

Please see above for information regarding number, qualification details, experience, training, and relevant continuing professional education of your proposed team and specified staff assigned of the engagement.

We believe knowledge, efficiency and effectiveness are optimized over time in a client relationship. We therefore strive to maintain continuity in Partners and key professionals from year to year. The public sector has been a major industry served by our firm since its inception. All members of your team are a part of the government and public sector industry group. This means that your team have devoted their careers to the public sector. This dedication and year-round work experience increases the quality of our staff.

In the mentoring and developing our staff, we normally experience a progression of staff responsibility during the years of service on the engagement allowing their knowledge of the client to increase the efficiency of our team. For many of our tenured clients, we have professionals that began as staff accountants and progressed to serve as managers, senior managers and partners on that engagement. We will periodically introduce new staff to our clients as bringing fresh talent and insight to the engagement team provides new ideas, while maintaining team continuity, which creates efficiency and reduces the learning curve for new team members.

However, if we lose a key person, we will replace that person from the top rather than from the bottom. For example, if the senior needs to be replaced, the manager will step in to perform their role until a replacement has been assigned and has been brought up to speed on the City's engagement. We will keep you informed of all personnel changes and, consistent with auditing principles generally accepted in the U.S., seek your agreement before any changes are made to key personnel.

## Engagements with Other Governmental Entities

*A. The firm should list separately all engagements within the last five (5) years for other governmental entities, by type of engagement (i.e. audit, management advisory services, other).*

### Government Experience

Government and public sector organizations are in an environment of accelerated change and greater expectations from the constituents they serve. From fluctuating budgets, new program demands, increasingly complex compliance restrictions, political uncertainty, economic changes, and the public need for greater access to services, we understand the distinct challenges state and local governments face.

Cherry Bekaert's Government & Public Sector (GPS) team has a deep understanding of the complex challenges state and local governments face, and we focus on the areas of highest need to help improve the transparency, efficiency and effectiveness government. With extensive knowledge of the methods and techniques applicable to government auditing, we are one of the largest providers in the state and local audit and accounting space, serving clients around the nation; **we provide targeted, risk-based, effective government auditing and assurance services to nearly 200 municipalities, counties, public authorities/boards, school districts, and state agencies, ranging in size from \$2 million to \$9 billion.** Using a digital approach with data-driven practices, we increase audit efficiency and enable government managers and leaders to better focus on delivering results to constituents. The experience gained through service to such a wide breadth and depth of public sector organizations provides us with invaluable insight into the issues and stresses impacting the City.

In the current environment, it is critical to have the right government accountant providing the proper technical guidance, reducing the demands on government staff and allowing entities to focus on their constituents. Many Cherry Bekaert team members have worked in government, helping us to better understand what you are trying to achieve and the obstacles and opportunities that may exist within your organization. Our professionals have held key positions for the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) and state and local committees. They attend and teach at conferences hosted by the Government Finance Officer Association (GFOA), the Association for School Business Officials (ASBO), the Association of Government Accountants (AGA), the American Association of Airport Executives (AAAE) and the Airports Council International (ACI).

### Addressing New Accounting, Reporting, Compliance, and Audit Requirements

Over the years, we have assisted our clients with GASB pronouncement implementation, providing research and advice to resolve many complex accounting issues, including:

- ▶ Providing assistance interpreting the fair value measurement and disclosure requirements under GASB #72 and the guidance for certain external investments pools and participants under GASB #79
- ▶ Assisting with analysis and implementation of the accounting and reporting aspects for pensions (GASB #67 and #68) and other postemployment benefits (GASB #74 and #75)
- ▶ Assisting with the analysis of fiduciary activities (GASB #84)
- ▶ Assisting with analysis of the accounting and reporting aspects of lease and SBITA accounting (GASB #87 and #96)

We typically meet with our clients during engagement planning and throughout fieldwork to discuss new pronouncements and issues surrounding implementation. We are very proactive in follow-up communication to derive appropriate solutions in the planning stages. Our knowledge of GASB requirements is complemented by our willingness to invest necessary time and resources, including appropriate consultation.



Cherry Bekaert also provided a professional from our government team to serve on a two-year GASB fellow program rotation, working with GASB on technical matters. As a GASB fellow, Scott Anderson, a Director from our GPS audit practice, was on the forefront of evolving standards currently contemplated. Scott's involvement provides unique insights we can share with our clients. He finished his rotation and returned to the Firm in August 2022.

Your engagement team offers an unmatched depth of knowledge in current GASB requirements, as well as future reporting standards such as:

- ▶ GASB #101 - Compensated Absences
- ▶ GASB #102 - Certain Risk Disclosures
- ▶ GASB #103 - Financial Reporting Model Improvements

New standards can have a significant impact on your organization's reporting, so we offer assistance in many areas, including:

- ▶ General diagnostic discussion with management
- ▶ Consultation and interpretive guidance, including GASB interpretations
- ▶ Checklists and other tools for compliance
- ▶ Assistance in identifying additional reports and data needed
- ▶ Review of your management's policies and practices applicable to specific pronouncements

### **Single Audits under Uniform Guidance**

Between 2019 and 2024, we performed compliance audits over more than 5,000 major programs, covering billions of dollars of Federal and State grants annually. We often communicate with federal and state agencies during our planning process to ensure we have the most recent regulatory requirements and to ensure we are familiar with any communications or monitoring that have been conducted in association with our clients that may influence the extent and nature of our procedures. We will perform the required Single Audit procedures in accordance with the Uniform Guidance. For major programs, we will test the accounting and administrative internal control systems in place over your federal and state programs. We will also test all major programs for compliance with specific and general grant requirements.

### **Thought Leadership**

The field of governmental accounting and financial management is dynamic for both you and your external auditors. Pronouncements from the following bodies all have significant impact on this sector:

- ▶ GASB (altering internal accounting and external reporting)
- ▶ AICPA (modifying audit standards and procedures)
- ▶ OMB (creating new compliance demands associated with the expenditure of Federal funds)

We consider the training of our professionals to be extremely important to best meet the evolving needs of our profession and provide the highest quality of service to our clients. Furthermore, we are dedicated to the continuing education of our clients and the greater Public Sector community. We offer webinars (<http://www.cbh.com/events/>) and seminars throughout the year, including the local chapters of the GFOA. It is this commitment to education and leadership of the public sector that has set us apart from other firms. Our professionals teach for the AICPA, GFOA and various other state and local government organizations. CPE topics we have provided to our clients and organizations in the past include:

- ▶ GASB and/or Uniform Guidance Update
- ▶ Evolution of Internal Control



- ▶ Behavioral Ethics
- ▶ Grant Administration Controls and Fraud Risks
- ▶ Risk Assessment topics
- ▶ Current Information Technology hot topics
- ▶ What's Your Fraud I.Q.?
- ▶ Coronavirus Relief Funds - Financial and Single Audit Considerations

Additionally, Cherry Bekaert's Government Services Blog (<http://www.cbh.com/industries/government/>) helps keep our governmental clients up to date on vital business and financial information.

## GFOA Certification Reporting

The GFOA Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting is highly recognized as the epitome of financial accountability and quality reporting. As a firm, we have provided support in obtaining and maintaining the certification to more than 75 governments, with several of our partners/directors participating in the program as certificate reviewers.

As with all of our GFOA submitting entities, we will assist you in any way necessary to help you continue to receive this award every year. Before issuance of our audit reports, we will review the City's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report in comparison to our Firm's standard governmental reporting checklist and the current GFOA reporting checklist to help ensure that the Annual Report is in compliance with the certificate program requirements. We will also review any comments received from the GFOA from the most recent submission to ensure all matters are addressed appropriately.

## Florida Public Sector Experience

We have served the Florida public sector since the 1970s, including many cities, towns, counties, special districts, school districts and state agencies throughout the state. Each of these clients generally require Single Audit and Annual Comprehensive Financial Reports, and cities/counties typically include component units. In just the last five (5) years, we have proudly provided auditing services to the following Florida public sector organizations:

Florida Audit/Attest Clients		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ ATU 1577</li> <li>▶ ATU Local 1596 Pension Plan</li> <li>▶ Boynton Beach General Employee's Retirement System</li> <li>▶ Brevard County, Florida</li> <li>▶ Broward County Public Schools</li> <li>▶ CareerSource Broward</li> <li>▶ Central Florida Regional Transportation Authority</li> <li>▶ Central Florida Tourism Oversight District</li> <li>▶ Charlotte County</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Collier County District School Board</li> <li>▶ Duval County Public Schools</li> <li>▶ Enterprise Florida, Inc.</li> <li>▶ Escambia County School District</li> <li>▶ Florida Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA)</li> <li>▶ Florida Development Finance Corporation (FDGC)</li> <li>▶ Florida Opportunity Fund, Inc.</li> <li>▶ HART (Hillsborough Transit Authority)</li> <li>▶ Indian River County School Board</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Palm Beach Gardens Police Pension Fund</li> <li>▶ Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority</li> <li>▶ Retirement System for General Employees</li> <li>▶ Sarasota County School Board</li> <li>▶ Sarasota Firefighters' Insurance Trust Fund</li> <li>▶ School District of Indian River County</li> <li>▶ School District of Manatee County</li> <li>▶ SelectFlorida</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ City of Bay Lake</li> <li>▶ City of Fort Myers</li> <li>▶ City of Hallandale Beach</li> <li>▶ City of Lake Buena Vista</li> <li>▶ City of Pinellas Park</li> <li>▶ City of St. Petersburg</li> <li>▶ City of Vero Beach</li> <li>▶ Clermont Firefighters' Retirement Plan</li> <li>▶ Clermont Police Officers' Retirement Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ International Drive Master Transit and Improvement District</li> <li>▶ Jacksonville Transportation Authority</li> <li>▶ Juvenile Welfare Board of Pinellas County</li> <li>▶ Martin County School Board</li> <li>▶ Miami-Dade Aviation Department</li> <li>▶ Miami-Dade Transit Department</li> <li>▶ Monroe County</li> <li>▶ Ocala PD</li> <li>▶ Orange County (including Health Facilities Authority, Industrial Development Authority, Library District and Public Schools)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ South Central Educational Risk Management Program</li> <li>▶ Space Florida</li> <li>▶ St. Johns County Airport Authority</li> <li>▶ St. John's County School District</li> <li>▶ St. Lucie County District School Board</li> <li>▶ Sunrise Firefighters' Retirement Plan</li> <li>▶ Tampa Bay Estuary Program</li> <li>▶ Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council</li> <li>▶ Village of Wellington</li> <li>▶ Volusia County Schools</li> </ul>
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### Additional Firmwide Clients

Cherry Bekaert takes great pride in providing industry-leading assurance services to nearly 200 public sector organizations. Following is a detailed list of **current government audit clients**. Each of these clients generally require Single Audit and Annual Comprehensive Financial Reports, and cities/counties typically include component units.

Cities and Towns		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ City of Hampton, VA</li> <li>▶ City of Chesapeake, VA</li> <li>▶ City of Newport News, VA</li> <li>▶ City of Suffolk VA</li> <li>▶ City of Virginia Beach, VA</li> <li>▶ City of Bowling Green, KY</li> <li>▶ City of Frankfort, KY</li> <li>▶ City of Jeffersontown, KY</li> <li>▶ City of Richmond, KY</li> <li>▶ City of Simpsonville KY</li> <li>▶ City of Charlotte, NC</li> <li>▶ City of Durham, NC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ City of Greenville, NC</li> <li>▶ City of Greensboro, NC</li> <li>▶ City of High Point, NC</li> <li>▶ City of Raleigh, NC</li> <li>▶ City of Reidsville, NC</li> <li>▶ City of Winston-Salem, NC</li> <li>▶ Town of Apex, NC</li> <li>▶ Town of Cary, NC</li> <li>▶ Town of Fuquay-Varina, NC</li> <li>▶ Town of Holly Springs, NC</li> <li>▶ Town of Lillington, NC</li> <li>▶ Town of Morrisville, NC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Town of Morven, NC</li> <li>▶ Town of Rolesville, NC</li> <li>▶ Town of Stanley, NC</li> <li>▶ Town of Wake Forest, NC</li> <li>▶ City of Harlem, GA</li> <li>▶ City of North Augusta, SC</li> <li>▶ Deerfield Township, OH</li> <li>▶ Liberty Township, OH</li> <li>▶ Village of Terrace Park, OH</li> <li>▶ West Chester Township, PH</li> <li>▶ City of Palos Hills, IL</li> </ul>

Counties		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ County of Hanover, VA</li> <li>▶ Fairfax County, VA</li> <li>▶ Henrico County, VA</li> <li>▶ Loudoun County, VA</li> <li>▶ Prince William County, VA</li> <li>▶ York County, VA</li> <li>▶ Durham County, NC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Cumberland County, NC</li> <li>▶ Forsyth County, NC</li> <li>▶ Guilford County, NC</li> <li>▶ Henderson County, NC</li> <li>▶ Mecklenburg County, NC</li> <li>▶ New Hanover County, NC</li> <li>▶ Randolph County, NC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Tyrrell County, NC</li> <li>▶ Union County, NC</li> <li>▶ Pickens County, SC</li> <li>▶ Richland County, SC</li> <li>▶ Augusta-Richmond County Consolidated Government, GA</li> <li>▶ Beaufort County, GA</li> <li>▶ Columbia County, GA</li> </ul>
Authorities, Commissions and Agencies		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Augusta Canal Authority, GA</li> <li>▶ Blue Island Fire Department, IL</li> <li>▶ Bonnie Brae Forest Manor Sanitary District, IL</li> <li>▶ Cleveland County Water, NC</li> <li>▶ Centralina Regional Council</li> <li>▶ Chattanooga Housing Authority, TN</li> <li>▶ Chesapeake Bay Bridge and Tunnel District, VA</li> <li>▶ Chesapeake Economic Development Authority, VA</li> <li>▶ Cook Memorial Public Library District, IL</li> <li>▶ Daviess County Fiscal Court, KY</li> <li>▶ Eastern Virginia Regional Facility Authority</li> <li>▶ Evansville Housing Authority, IN</li> <li>▶ Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority, VA</li> <li>▶ Fort Monroe Authority, VA</li> <li>▶ Greenville Utilities Commission, SC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Judicial Branch of Kentucky</li> <li>▶ Kentucky Association of Counties</li> <li>▶ Kentucky Economic Development Finance Authority</li> <li>▶ Kentucky State Fair Board</li> <li>▶ Kentucky Judicial Retirement System</li> <li>▶ Knoxville Community Development Corporation, TN</li> <li>▶ Lexington Convention &amp; Visitors Bureau, KY</li> <li>▶ Lexington Public Library, KY</li> <li>▶ Louisville Convention &amp; Visitors Bureau, KY</li> <li>▶ Marquis Community Development Authority, VA</li> <li>▶ Mecklenburg Emergency Medical Services, NC</li> <li>▶ Metropolitan Sewage District of Buncombe County, NC</li> <li>▶ Metropolitan Development and Housing Agency, TN</li> <li>▶ New Hanover County Airport Authority, NC</li> <li>▶ Newport News Industrial Development Authority, VA</li> <li>▶ Newport News Redevelopment and Housing Authority, VA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Piedmont Triad Regional Water Authority, NC</li> <li>▶ Public Library of Charlotte/Mecklenburg County, NC</li> <li>▶ Research Triangle Regional Public Transportation Authority, NC</li> <li>▶ Renewable Water Resources, SC</li> <li>▶ Richmond Metropolitan Transportation Authority, VA</li> <li>▶ Richmond Water, Gas &amp; Sewerage Works, KY</li> <li>▶ River Ridge Development Authority, IN</li> <li>▶ Southwest Regional Water District, OH</li> <li>▶ Southeastern Public Service Authority, VA</li> <li>▶ Spartanburg County Public Library, SC</li> <li>▶ Virginia Beach Development Authority</li> <li>▶ Virginia Passenger Rail Authority</li> <li>▶ Virginia Peninsulas Public Service Authority</li> <li>▶ Western Tidewater Water Authority, VA</li> </ul>

▶ Hampton Roads Sanitation District, VA	▶ North Carolina Educational Lottery	▶ York County Economic Development Authority, VA
▶ Hampton Roads Criminal Justice Training Academy, VA	▶ North Carolina Turnpike Authority	▶ Illinois Sports Facilities Authority
▶ Handy Sanitary Water Authority, NC	▶ Pamunkey Regional Library	▶ LaGrange Highlands Sanitary District, IL
▶ Highview Fire Protection District, KY	▶ Piedmont Municipal Power Agency, SC	▶ Mill Creek Water Reclamation District, IL
▶ Housing Authority Of Charlestown, IN	▶ Piedmont Triad Airport Authority, NC	▶ New Lenox Community Park District, IL
▶ Intercommunity Cable Regulatory Commission, OH	▶ Piedmont Triad Regional Council, NC	▶ Orland Fire Protection District, IL
		▶ South Palos Township Sanitary District, IL

***B. For each engagement, the firm should indicate the scope of work, date, engagement partners, total hours, the location of the firm's office from which the engagement was performed, and the name and current telephone number of the principal client contact.***

The best indicator of our ability to serve clients in a professional yet personalized manner is the outstanding reference provided by our clients. Provided are some of our references served by members of your engagement team. We can provide additional references if needed. We encourage you to call any of the individuals listed and ask them about our services and expertise.

<b>Client Name</b>	City of St. Petersburg & City of St. Petersburg CRA
<b>Scope of Work</b>	External Audit Services including ACFR (GFOA Certification), CRA Audit, Special Reports (including EMS Report in accordance with the ALS First Responder Agreement, Federal & State Single Audit (Same services described in the service requirements of the scope of services excluding requirement B (individual non-major funds)).
<b>Date</b>	2015 - Present
<b>Engagement Partner(s)</b>	Lauren Strobe, Dan Gougherty
<b>Total Hours</b>	1,250
<b>Primary Office Location(s)</b>	Central Florida
<b>Name and Telephone of Client contact</b>	Erika Langhans, Chief Financial Officer - 727.892.5652

<b>Name of Client</b>	City of Pinellas Park & City of Pinellas Park CRA
<b>Scope of Work</b>	External Audit Services including ACFR (GFOA Certification), CRA audit, and Federal and State Single Audits (when required)
<b>Date</b>	2008 - Present
<b>Engagement Partner(s)</b>	Lauren Strobe, Dan Gougherty
<b>Total Hours</b>	650
<b>Primary Office Location(s)</b>	Central Florida
<b>Name &amp; Telephone of Principal Client Contact</b>	Kelly Schrader, Finance Administrator - 727.369.0621

<b>Name of Client</b>	Brevard County & Brevard County CRA
<b>Scope of Work</b>	ACFR (GFOA Certification) Audit, CRA Audits, Federal and State Single Audits, BOCC and Constitutional Officer audits, CFCC, Landfill Escrow
<b>Date</b>	2019 – Present
<b>Engagement Partner(s)</b>	Brian Liffick, Lauren Strobe
<b>Total Hours</b>	2,250
<b>Primary Office Location(s)</b>	Central Florida
<b>Name &amp; Telephone of Principal Client Contact</b>	Kathleen Prothman, Finance Director - 321.264.5228

<b>Client Name</b>	Orange County, FL
<b>Scope of Work</b>	ACFR (GFOA Certification) Audit, Constitutional Officer Audits, Enterprise Fund Audits, CRA Audits, CFCC, Landfill Escrow, Federal & State Single Audit
<b>Date</b>	2001 - Present
<b>Engagement Partner(s)</b>	Brian Liffick, Lauren Strobe
<b>Total Hours</b>	3,500
<b>Primary Office Location(s)</b>	Central Florida
<b>Name and Telephone of Client contact</b>	Laurie Bauer, Director of Finance and Accounting - 407.836.5719

<b>Name of Client</b>	Charlotte County, FL
<b>Scope of Work</b>	External Audit Services including ACFR (GFOA Certification), CRA Audits, CFCC, Landfill Escrow, Federal & State Single Audit
<b>Date</b>	2012 - Present
<b>Engagement Partner(s)</b>	Brian Liffick, Lauren Strobe
<b>Total Hours</b>	1,300
<b>Primary Office Location(s)</b>	Central Florida
<b>Name &amp; Telephone of Principal Client Contact</b>	Stacy Wear, Finance Director - 941.743.1436



## TAB 3 – Audit Approach

*The proposal should set forth a general work plan, including an explanation of the audit methodology to be followed.*

Cherry Bekaert utilizes a risk-based tailored audit approach and program. The Firm employs an efficient, effective, compliant and time-tested audit process utilizing a methodology that facilitates quality and delivers a comprehensive and timely audit. Our approach focuses on a targeted examination of your financial statements by addressing the risks related to the fair presentation of the statements in accordance with U.S. generally accepted accounting principles. Our audit of the City will feature CCH Engagement software, a state-of-the-art automated environment enabling our audit documentation to be virtually paperless and our engagement team members to share files via wireless technology. We tailor Thomson Reuters PPC audit and accounting guidance to specifically address the audit and risk areas associated with each local government client. These audit programs will reflect the identified areas of risk and help us ensure that such areas receive the proper degree of audit consideration. Cherry Bekaert, like multiple accounting firms across the U.S., use PPC's Audit and Accounting guidance and audit engagement workflow tools as a starting point for our audit program sheets. PPC provides the breadth and depth for specific industry coverage and is always at the forefront of new and changing standards. Then the audit team will tailor these audit programs based on the specific risks (inherent, control and overall risk of material misstatement) that have been identified during the planning a brainstorming session by the audit team assigned to the City's audit.

The following chart shows the key procedures and audit segmentation applied during each of the defined stages of the audit engagement:

### I. Planning and Inherent Risk Assessment

#### Planning Procedures

##### 1. Initial Meetings with Management

We will schedule an entrance conference to introduce all key personnel, discuss the planned audit scope, and verify our understanding of communication channels and working relationships. These early discussions will ensure the City's awareness and compliance with new requirements and allow a reasonable amount of time for implementation and consultation. We will discuss the following:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Anticipated audit issues</li> <li>▶ New accounting principles and/or auditing updates</li> <li>▶ New laws or regulations, including Florida Statutes and Uniform Guidance/Chapter 10.550, and the expected impact on the City</li> <li>▶ Results of the predecessor auditor workpaper review</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Any staff concerns</li> <li>▶ Initial audit approach and dates, as well as dates and times for periodic audit progress meetings</li> <li>▶ Reporting requirements and deadlines</li> <li>▶ Assistance to be provided by the City staff</li> <li>▶ Review of any reports issued by regulatory agencies during the year</li> <li>▶ Audit concerns or operational changes that could affect the audits</li> <li>▶ We are happy to attend a City Council meeting before field work begins to discuss the audit process</li> <li>▶ Discussion of the status of the corrective action plans for the previous year findings (2024-01, 2024-02, 2024-03, and 2024-04.</li> </ul> |
|--|---|

## 2. Perform Preliminary Analytical Review Procedures

We will perform a preliminary analytical review to analyze the financial statements for unusual trends and results and to identify in advance the high audit risk areas. To strengthen audit confidence and risk assessment compliance, Cherry Bekaert uses MindBridge, an AI-enhanced auditing data analytic tool to analyze 100% of transactions using a risk-scoring mechanism based on predefined control points, including rule based, statistical and AI learned selection criteria. Using data analytics provides efficient means to spotting risks and anomalies. Having insight into riskier transactions and data anomalies enables our engagement team to better understand the risk of material misstatement and design more effective audit procedures. Extended audit procedures are then focused on the areas of unusual results or potential audit risk.

## 3. Determine Audit Materiality

We will calculate materiality during the preliminary planning process for the audit. However, it must be pointed out that this calculated materiality is only a starting point. Auditing standards define materiality from the viewpoint of the user of the financial statements, not the auditor. The question we have to ask is, "Would it affect the user's conclusions regarding the financial position or results of operations of the City, if the adjustment was not made or a particular fact was not disclosed?"

As a result, for certain areas, such as compliance requirements or potential fraud related to cash receipts, our materiality levels may be adjusted to take into account the user's perspective.

**Assess the Risk of Fraud:** The auditor's consideration of inherent, fraud, and internal control risk (including control environment, risk assessment, communication, and monitoring) affects the nature, timing, and extent of testing. During the planning phase, we will identify and document all risks and associate them with significant financial statement line items and assertions during the Risk Assessment Synthesis (RAS). For each risk identified, we will also document the nature and extent of the risk and condition(s) that gave rise to the risk. Typical procedures include:

- ▶ Hold audit team meetings to "brainstorm" ideas regarding how fraud could be perpetrated and concealed.
- ▶ Inquire of management and others significantly involved in financial reporting to: (1) identify known instances of fraud and (2) determine how someone could rationalize, perpetrate, and conceal fraud.
- ▶ Evaluate the possibility that management could override internal controls.

**Inherent Risk Assessment:** Inherent risk involves the degree to which a financial statement assertion is susceptible to misstatement due to the nature of the account. The objective of our inherent risk assessment is to take into consideration all that we have learned about the organization, changes that have occurred during the year, its operating environment, and about the risk of fraud and determine what our audit response, if any, should be. The risks identified and our planned responses to these risks will be summarized and documented in our working papers.

## II. Internal Control Documentation, Verification and Testing

Our internal control phase will be designed to carefully assess control-risk factors corresponding with all significant financial statement assertions. We will conform to AICPA's risk-assessment standards, which include evaluating and testing internal controls to support our report on the following determinations:

- ▶ Assets are safeguarded from loss from unauthorized acquisition, use, or disposition;
- ▶ Transactions are executed in accordance with budget authority and significant provisions of applicable laws and regulations; and
- ▶ Transactions are properly recorded, processed, and summarized to permit preparation of the financial statements and to maintain accountability for assets.

**Entity Level Controls:** As part of our entity level control assessment, we will consider whether there are organizational-wide processes that promote strong internal controls.

Verification of these entity level controls is generally performed through the use of interviews of key staff and review of documentation maintained by those key staff.

1. *Monitoring* - Document and assess the effectiveness of the City's monitoring activities

2. *Control Environment*

- ▶ Management philosophy
- ▶ Management's attitude towards risks
- ▶ Oversight by the City board of commissioners
- ▶ Integrity and ethical values
- ▶ Promotion of ethics and appropriate conduct
- ▶ Organizational structure
- ▶ Assignment of authority and responsibility
- ▶ Workforce competence and human resource development

3. *Risk Assessment*

- ▶ Document the results of the most recent organizational-wide risk assessment.
- ▶ Determine whether a process is established for on-going risk assessments of the impact of change on key financial processes

4. *Information and Communication* - Document and assess how the City gathers, uses, and disseminates information.

### Process Level Control Activities

*Documentation* - Obtain and review documentation of process level control activities applicable to:

- ▶ All significant fiscal processes
- ▶ Accounting administration
- ▶ The general ledger
- ▶ Information systems
- ▶ Year-end close and financial reporting

*Verification* - We will verify that all key controls identified are in place and appear to be operating effectively. This is done by inquiry and observation, and walk-through procedures that trace process from initiation to completion.

**Testing:** The team will prepare sampling control test work plans. We will select the most effective and efficient testing techniques when determining the nature of the tests to apply. The nature of our testing will fall into one of the following three non-sampling control test categories:

- ▶ **Observation** involves physically observing organization personnel performing the control technique to be tested.
- ▶ **Inquiry** involves making either oral or written inquiries of organization personnel responsible for specific control techniques to determine what they do or how they perform a specific control technique.
- ▶ **Inspection** involves examining documents and records for evidence that a control technique actually occurred.

Determining the timing of control tests depends on the type of test. For example, observations should be conducted during the period under audit. Inspections, on the other hand, could be performed after year-end, as long as documents being examined are from the period under audit. The extent of testing is determined by auditor judgment to be the level necessary to assess the effectiveness of the controls.

Our use of sampling will also consider requirements of the Uniform Guidance and Chapter 10.550. If necessary, we will draw representative sample selections for each separate system of internal control over major federal and state programs. We will integrate these tests, to the extent possible, with required sampling for reliance on other aspects of the City's internal control structure.

*Perform Non-sampling Control Tests* - We will perform and evaluate non-sampling control test results, test information system controls associated with financial reporting, and evaluate results. We also will test internal control over compliance with laws and regulations that could have a direct and material effect on the financial statements. We will test controls sufficiently to support a low assessed level of control risk or report findings where controls in operation cannot support that risk assessment.

*Conduct Sampling Control Tests* - Sampling control tests are conducted if sufficient evidence cannot be obtained through non-sampling procedures. A sampling control test is conducted by taking a sample of transactions and determining if the control technique being tested was in place for the sampled items during the audit period. Based on test results, we will reassess control and combined risk. Whenever possible, the team will also make use of computerized audit tools, such as Interactive Data Extraction and Analysis (IDEA), to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of sampling control tests.

*Assess Control Risk* - Based on our evaluation of the above steps, and the results of our tests of controls, we will assess control risk. Control risk is the risk that a material misstatement is not prevented or detected in a timely manner by the City's systems of internal control. We then will assess control risk in light of our assessment of inherent risk to determine combined risk. The team will then document its assessment of control risk.

**Integration of Information System Controls Testing:** The Cherry Bekaert team has developed an integrated financial statement audit approach to ensure that Information System ("IS") controls are considered when determining the amount of reliance that can be placed upon internal controls for financial reporting and compliance with laws and regulations.

Our review procedures of general controls of the Tyler Munis system are categorized as follows:

- ▶ **Entity-wide security program planning and management controls** provide a framework and continuing cycle of activity for managing risk, developing security policies, assigning responsibilities, and monitoring the adequacy and effectiveness of IS and security controls.
- ▶ **Access controls** limit or detect access to computer resources (data, programs, equipment, and facilities), thereby protecting these resources against unauthorized modifications, loss, and disclosure.
- ▶ **System development and program change controls** prevent implementation of unauthorized programs or modifications to existing programs that may alter financial data, modify or destroy application audit trails, or introduce processing errors.
- ▶ **System software controls** limit and monitor access to powerful programs, utilities and sensitive files that control computer hardware, secure applications supported by the system, and monitor and record activities.
- ▶ **Segregation-of-duties controls** provide policies, procedures, and an organizational structure to prevent one individual from controlling key aspects of computer-related operations and thereby conducting unauthorized actions or gain unauthorized access to assets or financial records.
- ▶ **Service continuity controls** ensure that when unexpected events occur, critical operations continue without interruption or are promptly resumed to minimize the impact of the disruption on an entity's critical mission and to protect sensitive data from destruction.

### III. Risk Assessment Synthesis

We use a risk assessment synthesis process to summarize results of our initial planning, inherent risk assessment, and documentation of entity level and process level internal controls. The risk assessment synthesis process is designed to:

- ▶ Identify significant audit areas
- ▶ Document the risks of material misstatement affecting each area (including fraud risks or other significant risks)
- ▶ Assess those risks and select an audit approach that is appropriately tailored to respond to the assessed level of risk,
- ▶ Document the linkage of the assessed risks to the audit procedures that respond to those risks

One of the byproducts of this process will be the identification of potential improvements that could be made to strengthen the internal control process, eliminate duplicative controls or improve the operating efficiency of the City's financial processes. Any observations will be shared with the City's management team at the conclusion of this phase of the audit. We will also use the lessons learned to develop our customized audit programs by significant area that reflects our risk assessment process.

#### IV. Compliance Testing

This engagement will include the issuance of an opinion on the annual financial statements prepared by the City, and applying procedures and reporting on the schedule of expenditures of Federal and State awards presented as supplementary information. The engagement will also include consideration, testing, and reporting on the City's internal controls and compliance, for both laws and regulations that could have a material impact on the financial statements, as well as compliance requirements material to major Federal and State programs. The aforementioned statement of work will be performed in accordance with GAAS; the standards for financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States; and the provisions of Uniform Guidance, Audits of States and Local Governments and the Florida Single Audit Implementation Act. We will audit the special purpose Schedule of Revenues and Expenditures of Emergency Medical Services in accordance with the ALS First Responder Agreement. Lastly, we will perform procedures over the City's compliance with Florida Statutes.

Our compliance audit procedures will be designed to identify and test those transactions and activities that are likely to have a direct and material impact on the City's basic financial statements and to determine whether they were carried out in accordance with the provisions of laws, rules, contracts, and grantor guidelines. Our reports will note instances of noncompliance that could have a direct and material effect on the City's financial statements.

The nature and extent of our compliance tests are derived from the following:

- ▶ Results of our analysis of internal control over compliance matters
- ▶ Review of debt documents
- ▶ Correspondence with Federal and State agencies
- ▶ Review of the City's agreements
- ▶ ALS First Responder Agreement
- ▶ Review of the City's internal policies and procedures
- ▶ Florida statutes
- ▶ Grant agreements
- ▶ AICPA Statements of Position
- ▶ AICPA Statements on Auditing Standards
- ▶ *Government Auditing Standards*
- ▶ Uniform Guidance Compliance Supplement and Chapter 10.550
- ▶ Other applicable professional standards and guidance

#### V. Further Audit Procedures (Substantive Testing)

We will perform substantive tests to form conclusions about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatements. These customized audit procedures come directly from our risk assessment procedures.

##### **Conduct Substantive Tests: The objective of our substantive testing is to:**

- ▶ Determine if financial statement assertions are materially misstated
- ▶ Form an opinion about whether the principal statements are presented fairly in accordance with the organization's basis of accounting

Substantive test procedures will be applied to all significant assertions in each significant financial statement line item and account. As with the sampling control testing described above, the team makes use of computerized audit tools to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of substantive tests. The extent of substantive testing is based largely upon our assessed level of combined risk. For example, if we assess combined risk as low, then we can rely upon internal controls and perform limited testing.



If, however, we assess combined risk as high, we must obtain all assurance from substantive testing to express an opinion on the financial statements. The two types of substantive tests are analytical review procedures and detail tests.

- ▶ **Analytical review procedures** involve establishing an expectation of what a significant balance or transaction total should be. If the actual amount is within a certain limit of the established expectation, then the auditor may determine that no further testing is necessary or that additional detail testing is desirable.
- ▶ **Detail tests** are procedures applied to individual items selected for testing and include confirmation, physical observation, vouching, and recalculation.

**Conduct Tests Related to Fraud Risks:** We will perform testing for fraud risks identified during the planning phase that are not mitigated by internal controls. Testing will be combined with substantive and compliance testing to the extent practical. In addition to testing for specifically identified fraud risk, we will perform the following procedures to identify fraud related to management override of controls:

- ▶ Examine journal entries and other significant adjustments.
- ▶ Review accounting estimates.
- ▶ Evaluate the business rationale for significant and non-recurring transactions.

**Complete Overall Analytical Review Procedures:** Once all the final adjustments are recorded and a final draft of the financial statements has been prepared, we will conduct analytical review procedures. Specifically, we will review the financial statements and supporting trial balances for key relationships and determine if audit evidence is consistent with variances noted during preliminary analytical procedures. Our analytic review will include trend and comparative analysis and will encompass the use of key liquidity, performance and operational metrics.

**Determine Adequacy of Audit Procedures and Audit Scope:** In the planning phase, we determined planning materiality based on preliminary information. Based on planning materiality, we determined design and test materiality levels, which impacted the nature and extent of testing. We now will determine a final materiality based upon audited balances. In light of the final assessment of combined risk and final materiality level, we will consider if the extent of substantive audit procedures was sufficient.

**Evaluate Known and Likely Misstatements:** Misstatements will be evaluated both in quantitative and qualitative terms. Based largely on these considerations and our evaluation, we will determine the type of audit opinion and internal control and compliance reports to render.

## VI. Reporting

**Review of ACFR for GFOA Compliance:** Before issuance of our audit reports, we will review the ACFR in comparison to our Firm's standard governmental reporting checklist and the current GFOA reporting checklist to help ensure compliance with the certificate program requirements. We will also review any comments received from the most recent submission and discuss management's response to ensure all matters are addressed appropriately.

We will prepare the following reports in accordance with GAAS, GAS, Uniform Guidance, and Chapter 10.550, Rules of the Auditor General:

- ▶ Report of Independent Auditor on the financial statements and an in-relation to opinion on supplementary information - this includes an opinion on the fair presentation of the City's individual non-major governmental, non-major enterprise, internal service and fiduciary funds of the financial statements.
- ▶ Report of Independent Auditor on Internal Controls over Financial Reporting and on Compliance and Other Matters Based on an Audit of Financial Statements Performed in Accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*
- ▶ Reports of Independent Auditor on Compliance for Each Major Program and on Internal Control Over Compliance Required by the Uniform Guidance and Chapter 10.550, Rules of the Auditor General, for both Federal and State programs (including a schedule of findings and questioned costs)
- ▶ Complete the auditor sections of the Data Collection Form
- ▶ Management letter in conformance with Chapter 10.550 Rules of the Auditor General (State of Florida).
- ▶ A report on the EMS "Schedule of Revenues and Expenditures of Emergency Medical Services" and the "EMS Financial Information Attestation Form" required by Pinellas County
- ▶ Report of Independent Accountant on Compliance with Local Government Investment Policies in accordance with Sections 218.415 and Community Redevelopment Agency Requirements of Section 163.387(8) (for the CRA), Florida Statutes
- ▶ External Auditor's Communication with the City Board of Commissioners

We will review our auditor's reports, management letter, and other matters with management. After meeting with management, the finalized reports will be made available to the City.

**A. Proposed segmentation of the engagement B. Level of staff and percentage of hours to be assigned to each proposed segment of the engagement**

Percentage of Hours by Segment and Staff Level				
Partner/Director	Manager	Senior	Staff	Total
<b>Phase I – Planning and Inherent Risk Assessment</b>				
2%	2%	1%	0%	5%
<b>Phase II – Internal Control Documentation, Verification and Testing</b>				
2%	4%	8%	6%	20%
<b>Phase III – Risk Assessment Synthesis</b>				
1%	2%	1%	1%	5%
<b>Phase IV – Compliance Testing</b>				
1%	2%	6%	5%	14%
<b>Phase V – Further Audit Procedures (Substantive Testing)</b>				
3%	5%	18%	15%	41%
<b>Phase VI – Reporting</b>				
3%	5%	5%	2%	15%
<b>Totals</b>				
12%	20%	39%	29%	100%

**C. Extent of EDP software use in the engagement**

**Use of Technology**

Leveraging the power of technology is critical as financial and operational systems become more complex, companies expand operations, and regulatory requirements change. Cherry Bekaert employs and offers expertise in a wide range of solutions and platforms to improve the efficiency, quality, compliance, integration and speed of our engagements. Our audit and advisory services combine data analysis software, wireless technology and engagement management software. As such, our documentation is virtually paperless with procedures documented in an automated environment and files shared through encrypted wireless technology among engagement team members. We will also provide a secure client portal for transmitting information to the engagement team over the internet.

### Secure Document Management

Cherry Bekaert uses Suralink for secure, web-based document management, allowing clients to transmit data files to our team. Authentication to the Suralink portal utilizes unique login credentials, and data is secured through SSL encryption.

### MindBridge

MindBridge leverages artificial intelligence (AI) to detect unintentional errors and intentional misstatements, minimizing financial loss while automating our audit approach. We use its AI-enhanced risk-scoring mechanism to focus on higher-risk items, improving the efficiency of journal entry testing. In addition, MindBridge enables us to perform a revenue reconciliation and proof of cash exercise by simply uploading your general ledger, which reduces the revenue sample sizes our teams need to detail test.

### DataSnipper

DataSnipper is an intelligent automation platform built and optimized for audit procedures to extract, cross-reference and validate source documents. It allows us to complete audit tasks up to 10x faster and focus more time on audit risk areas while helping standardize documentation to easily meet regulator demands.

### Workpaper Management & Trial Balances

We manage workpapers with CCH Engagement, allowing us to prepare, review, transfer and manage our work in a paperless environment. It has a trial balance feature to reduce time and effort; we request that clients provide a file containing the trial balance – including ending, actual and final budget balances – in a format such as Excel which we upload into our software. The software has an account grouping feature which allows each general ledger account to be grouped to a specific financial statement line.

### Data Analysis Software

We use IDEA data analysis software to test for ways to improve efficiency and effectiveness while providing a robust audit, and ActiveData advanced data analytics and statistics to assist in understanding trends and identifying anomalies.

As a demonstration of our commitment to leveraging technology for our clients' benefit, Cherry Bekaert was one of four firms to be recognized in the first-ever [MindBridge Community Awards](#). The awards were presented by MindBridge and recognize companies who are using the MindBridge platform to deliver innovative solutions, services and support to their clients. The Firm received the MindBridge Impact Award, which recognizes an organization whose efforts have had a clear impact on business outcomes, improving the client experience, driving operational efficiency, creating cost savings and/or impacting revenue performance.



*“These awards reflect MindBridge’s mission to improve the global financial system by building the world’s leading risk discovery platform”, says Leyton Perris, CEO of MindBridge. “These leading firms have shown us where the future of audit is heading”.*

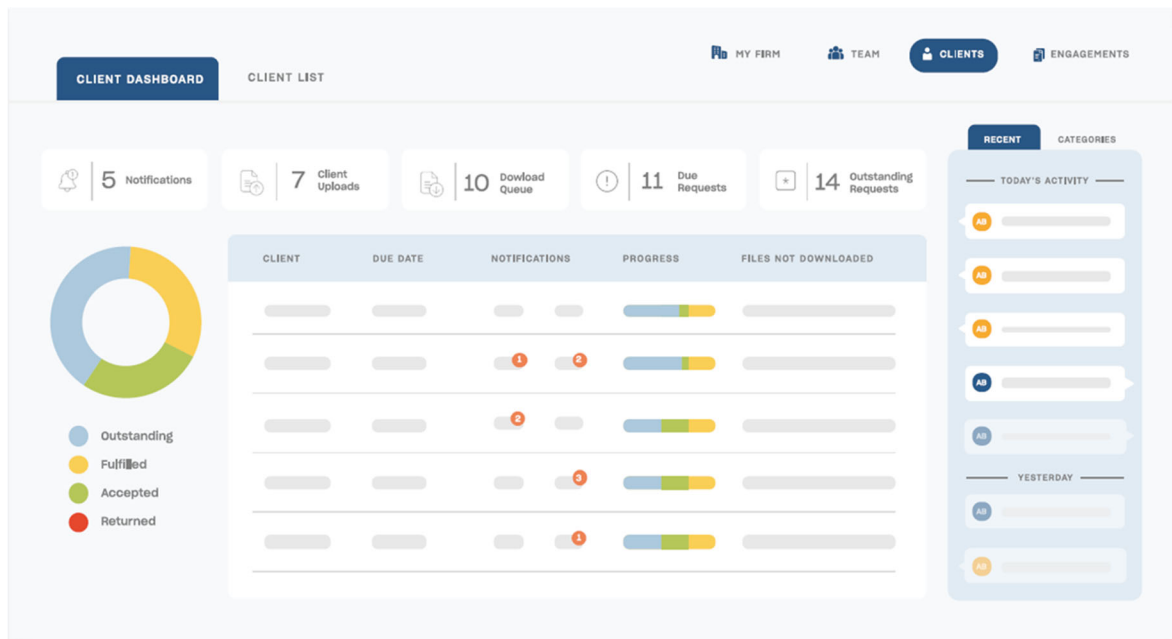
## Coordination & Communication Using Suralink

To ensure seamless delivery and efficient communication, we will utilize Suralink® throughout the audit process. This powerful cloud-based tool allows us to track and manage the entire audit engagement in real-time through a highly secure platform. You can attach documents, log comments and notes, schedule check-in meetings, share screens and show request status and progress throughout the year, not just at final fieldwork or at a single point in the process. Suralink provides more real-time information for clients to have better transparency on the progress and status of requests throughout the engagement compared to other solutions.

We have collaborated with clients to employ our technology and tools to restructure the audit processes, creating virtual audit environments that provided high quality with flexible scheduling. This minimized disruptions decreased the need for lengthy in-person meeting requirements. However, we understand building trust in a relationship is important and frequent interaction is necessary. We utilize Microsoft Teams to meet remotely with clients and Suralink® to stay engaged with our clients throughout the engagement process. We understand that remote/virtual auditing does not work for all parts of the audit and will work with your staff to determine what procedures/activities need to be on-site during the planning phase.

Your engagement team will share in a way that creates efficiencies and enhances a collaborative communication environment. Service delivery using Suralink® allows us to:

- ▶ Promote real-time and year-round collaborative planning, communication and status updates
- ▶ Integrate the technology of information sharing seamlessly and without disruption
- ▶ Decompress the evidence gathering burden on your team
- ▶ Reduce distractions to your team
- ▶ Minimize your training of Cherry Bekaert staff
- ▶ Enhance specialist interaction



**Information Security Statement:** The Firm takes the security of all our clients' data very seriously. Suralink® encryption and access controls protect your data at rest and in transit. In addition, Cherry Bekaert maintains Information Security Policies and monitoring procedures that only allow authorized individuals to access client data within Suralink® based on their job function.

***D. Approach to be taken to gain and document an understanding of the City of Clearwater's internal control structure*****Internal Control Testing Methods**

Internal control assessment is a significant part of our audit process, included in planning, risk assessment and throughout our testing procedures. We will focus internal control assessment for the City on the following audit and accounting areas:

- ▶ Cash receipts
- ▶ Cash disbursements
- ▶ Payroll
- ▶ Grant Compliance
- ▶ Budgeting
- ▶ Journal entries
- ▶ Financial close out procedures

During the preliminary planning segment, we will review the internal control environment over the City's financial processes. We will conduct this internal control review from an information technology perspective, but will also include manual controls over the transactional flow in the account balances. By relying on controls from a compliance perspective, we will gain an understanding of the processes and controls related to the City. As appropriate, during this control review we may test certain controls that we will rely on when performing the audit. Reviewing and testing controls over the City's financial processes during the planning segment will give us a strong understanding of the significant areas and processes of the City we will need to perform an efficient and effective audit.

Our internal control procedures include a combination of interviews, inquiries, document inspection, walkthroughs of transaction processing and observation, noting the adequacy of internal controls in light of processes recommended by the Committee of Sponsoring Organizations (COSO). When conducting our internal control procedures, we assess the potential for error and what could go wrong, designing our audit procedures to assure controls exist to prevent errors and to assess the adequacy of controls to detect errors should they occur. In the event of error, we find it important to understand how it occurred and to assess what can be done to inhibit future occurrence. As a by-product, we also assess the potential for best practice improvements in efficiency and effectiveness, although those are not our primary objectives in conducting an audit of financial statements.

**Integration of Information System Controls Testing**

The Firm has developed a financial statement audit approach to ensure that IT controls are considered when determining reliance that can be placed upon internal controls for financial reporting and compliance with laws and regulations. Our review procedures of general controls of Tyler Munis are categorized as follows:

- ▶ Entity-wide security program planning and management controls provide a framework and continuing cycle of activity for managing risk, developing security policies, assigning responsibilities, and monitoring the adequacy and effectiveness of Information Technology and security controls.
- ▶ Access controls limit or detect access to computer resources (data, programs, equipment, and facilities), thereby protecting these resources against unauthorized modifications, loss, and disclosure. System development and program change controls prevent implementation of unauthorized programs or modifications to existing programs that may alter financial data, modify or destroy application audit trails, or introduce processing errors.



- ▶ System software controls limit and monitor access to powerful programs and utilities and sensitive files that control computer hardware, secure applications supported by the system, and monitor and record activities.
- ▶ Segregation-of-duty controls provide policies, procedures, and an organizational structure to prevent one individual from controlling key aspects of computer-related operations and thereby conducting unauthorized actions or gain unauthorized access to assets or financial records.

The extent of our IT procedures will be based on the perceived efficiency of the audit approach. For example, we would typically audit utilities by sampling customers, examining their monthly billings, recalculating the charges (based on established the City's rates), and vouching cash receipts to payment support. However, if it were deemed more efficient, we could perform application testing. This would involve testing the City's utility billing system. Once this testing was performed successfully, we would be able to rely on that system to provide competent audit evidence. But regardless of the approach, at a minimum we will obtain an understanding of the City's IT environment and perform walk throughs of the information technology general controls (ITGC). In performing ITGC walk throughs we have historically identified a number of recommendations in areas such as:

- ▶ Password management
- ▶ Change management
- ▶ Permission authorization
- ▶ Rights and privileges of terminated employees

#### ***E. Approach to be taken in determining laws and regulations subject to audit test work***

As a major provider of state/local government audit services, we are well versed in performing reviews of operations, financial transactions and/or activities to determine how well they conform with established State/Federal laws, standards, regulations and organizational policies/procedures. Additionally, our involvement in the accounting community, including various FGFOA chapters, GASB, and FICPA Local Government Committees, ensures that we stay ahead and informed of new regulations that will be subject to audit work.

Our compliance audit procedures are designed to:

- ▶ Understand the regulatory requirements specific to selected audit areas,
- ▶ Assess internal controls over governance and compliance,
- ▶ Identify and test those transactions and activities that are likely to have a financial impact on the financial statements and to determine whether they were carried out in accordance with the provisions of laws, rules, investments, bonds, Florida Statutes, ordinances / resolutions, contracts and grantor agreements applicable to the City.

The nature and extent of our compliance tests are derived from the following:

- ▶ Results of our analysis of internal control over compliance matters
- ▶ Review of bond documents
- ▶ Correspondence with federal and state agencies
- ▶ Review of inter-jurisdictional agreements and internal policies
- ▶ Florida statutes and grant agreements

We will conduct our audit in accordance with standards applicable to financial audits contained in auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America, GAS and Single Audit (both federal and state). We will work with the City's personnel during interim fieldwork to determine key requirements to test by inquiring on key compliance requirements that the City regularly monitors and by selecting grants to be tested under Uniform Guidance and the Florida Single Audit Act.

We will also review debt covenants, the ALN agreement, contractual requirements, Florida Statutes, key ordinances and resolutions and investment policies. In doing so, we will utilize programs and procedures already established for county governments. Our reports will note instances of noncompliance, if any, that could have a direct and material effect on the financial statements or on compliance reporting required grantors.

#### ***F. Sample sizes and the extent to which statistical sampling is to be used in the engagement***

Our tailored audit program will employ statistical and non-statistical sampling to ensure that we select and review transactions in sufficient detail to formulate conclusions regarding the fair presentation of the financial statements, the City compliance with regulations, and the existence of properly functioning internal control. Given the City's requirement for all non-major funds to be audited, we will ensure that sampling is performed for each fund's materiality. Cherry Bekaert has developed sample size guidelines in accordance with GAAS and GAS for all samples performed to form our opinions on the fair presentation of the financial statements. The objective of the guidelines is to improve the quality of sampling by:

- ▶ Relating sample sizes more directly to factors that influence sample size;
- ▶ Reducing unexplainable sample size variability; and
- ▶ Encouraging the use of statistical sampling.

Structured worksheets, which give appropriate recognition to factors such as reliance on internal control, nature and timing of audit procedures, dollar total of population being sampled, and the estimated sampling error, are used to effectively determine audit samples and evaluate the results. We will use these worksheets to determine the sample size for testing over areas such as capital asset additions /dispositions, cash disbursements, accounts receivable, and accounts payable. Sample sizes will vary based on materiality and the population being tested. The extent to which we apply detailed audit procedures and sampling is based on:

- ▶ Quantitative and qualitative components of our materiality determination;
- ▶ Our evaluation of audit risks and internal accounting controls; and
- ▶ The characteristics of items comprising the account balances or class of transactions.

#### ***G. Type and extent of analytical procedures to be used in the engagement***

Analytical procedures are a required part of every audit engagement under current auditing standards. Below is a summary of how we plan to use these procedures throughout our audit:

- ▶ **Planning analytics.** Analytical procedures will be used in planning the audit to enhance our understanding of the System and identify risks of material misstatement. In performing analytical procedures as risk assessment procedures, we will develop expectations about plausible relationships that are reasonably expected to exist. When the relationship of the recorded amounts or ratios developed from recorded amounts yields unusual or unexpected relationships, we will consider those relationships in identifying risks of material misstatement. Accordingly, we will design our audit procedures to address those risks of material misstatement.

- ▶ **Analytics as a substantive test.** Analytical procedures will be used as substantive procedures throughout fieldwork and wrap-up phase of the audit that contribute to all the objectives of substantive tests, but particularly those of existence or occurrence, valuation or allocation and completeness. We focus primarily on revenues and expenses of the City as appropriate.
- ▶ **Final review.** We utilize analytical procedures during our final review of the financial statements to consider whether any items do not meet our expectations developed during the course of our fieldwork.

Examples of substantive tests include:

- ▶ Analytical review procedures are based upon establishing an expectation of what a significant balance or transaction total should be. If the actual amount is within a certain limit of the established expectation, then the auditor may determine that no further testing is necessary or that additional detail testing is desirable.
- ▶ Detail tests are procedures applied to individual items selected for testing and include confirmation, physical observation, vouching and recalculation.

Examples of typical substantive test work procedures include:

- ▶ Confirmation of cash and investment balances (detailed)
- ▶ Comparison of charges for services in the enterprise funds to an expectation based on approved rates and customer data (analytical)
- ▶ Review of the City's budget vs. actual revenues and expenditures (analytical)

We also plan to conduct tests of internal controls over journal entries, grant compliance, disbursements, payroll, budgeting, and significant receipts. Testing of internal controls and concluding that controls are operating effectively allow us to rely on the control environments to reduce our substantive testing in these areas. Relying on receipts test of controls allows us to:

- ▶ Conduct a more analytical approach to testing revenues (budget versus actual, current year versus prior year, ratio analytics, etc.)
- ▶ Perform dual-purpose testing or reduced tests of details of specific transactions
- ▶ Further focus our substantive tests of details on those transactions that fall outside the standard control environment (cutoff testing and journal entry testing)

#### ***H. Approach to be taken in drawing audit samples for purposes of tests of compliance***

Our sample sizes will consider audit risk through reliability and precision factors. Auditing standards prescribe the criteria for developing sample sizes, which we have utilized based on carrying degrees of reliance and confidence in internal control structure. If necessary, we will draw representative sample selections for each applicable compliance requirement of internal control over major federal programs and state financial assistance projects. We will integrate these tests, to the extent possible, with required sampling for reliance on other aspects of the City's internal control structure. We will work with your staff to fully understand the population of the compliance requirement prior to performing sampling procedures.

Because our sample sizes are affected by many variables, a statement about sample sizes cannot be made in absolute terms. However, with regard to sample selection, we generally will utilize statistically generated, representative sampling for internal control and compliance tests. Samples will also be used in conjunction with other tests of compliance (e.g. Florida Statutes, Ordinances, etc.).

For tests of compliance pertaining to major federal programs and state financial assistance projects and EMS expenditures, we will utilize the guidance in Chapter 11 of the AICPA Audit Guide: *Government Auditing Standards and Single Audits*.

***Identification of Potential Audit Problems. The proposal should identify and describe any potential audit problems, the firm's approach to resolving, and any special assistance that will be requested from the City.***

We do not anticipate any potential audit problems. To avoid any surprises, our client service team prepares management comments with a "bottom-up" review approach. This allows any draft comments or recommendations to be initially reviewed at the departmental level directly responsible for the activity under review, and only subsequently discussed at higher levels if the observation has been validated.

A smooth engagement begins with detailed planning and execution. We provide our clients with an organized approach, clear expectations for both parties, and detailed timelines. We hold regular status meetings with our clients where we provide a dashboard highlighting potential problems in meeting milestones and budget. This allows our clients to see potential problem areas at a glance. Each problem is presented with a solution and discussed with the client. For significant problems, we immediately communicate them to our clients, along with a proposed solution, rather than wait for the next regularly scheduled status meeting.

We further do not employ a "gotcha" strategy; any suggested improvements will be constructive, and both Cherry Bekaert and the City's staff will agree to the facts behind any observations before any finding progresses toward reporting. Our findings will contain a statement of condition describing the situation and the matter needing attention, what should be corrected, and why.

At this time, we do not anticipate any special assistance being requested from the City. In the event that special assistance is needed, the matter would be immediately communicated to the City.

## TAB 4 – References

*A minimum of three (3) references, preferably from other public entities within the State of Florida, for whom you have provided similar services. Include the name of entity, contact person's names, phone numbers, e-mail addresses, mailing addresses, type of service provided, dates these services were provided.*

<b>Client Name</b>	City of St. Petersburg & City of St. Petersburg CRA
<b>Scope of Work</b>	External Audit Services including ACFR (GFOA Certification), CRA Audit, Special Reports (including EMS Report in accordance with the ALS First Responder Agreement, Federal & State Single Audit (Same services described in the service requirements of the scope of services excluding requirement B (individual non-major funds)).
<b>Date</b>	2015 - Present
<b>Engagement Partner(s)</b>	Lauren Strobe, Dan Gougherty
<b>Total Hours</b>	1,250
<b>Primary Office Location(s)</b>	Central Florida
<b>Name and Telephone of Client contact</b>	Erika Langhans, Chief Financial Officer 727.892.5652 <a href="mailto:Erika.langhans@stpete.org">Erika.langhans@stpete.org</a>

<b>Name of Client</b>	City of Pinellas Park & City of Pinellas Park CRA
<b>Scope of Work</b>	External Audit Services including ACFR (GFOA Certification), CRA audit, and Federal and State Single Audits (when required)
<b>Date</b>	2008 - Present
<b>Engagement Partner(s)</b>	Lauren Strobe, Dan Gougherty
<b>Total Hours</b>	650
<b>Primary Office Location(s)</b>	Central Florida
<b>Name &amp; Telephone of Principal Client Contact</b>	Kelly Schrader, Finance Administrator 727.369.0621 <a href="mailto:kschrader@pinellas-park.com">kschrader@pinellas-park.com</a>

<b>Name of Client</b>	Brevard County & Brevard County CRA
<b>Scope of Work</b>	ACFR (GFOA Certification) Audit, CRA Audits, Federal and State Single Audits, BOCC and Constitutional Officer audits, CFCC, Landfill Escrow
<b>Date</b>	2019 – Present
<b>Engagement Partners/Mangers/Specialists/Supervisory Staff</b>	Brian Liffick, Lauren Strobe
<b>Total Hours</b>	2,250
<b>Primary Office Location(s)</b>	Central Florida
<b>Name &amp; Telephone of Principal Client Contact</b>	Kathleen Prothman, Finance Director 321.264.5228 <a href="mailto:kathleen.prothman@brevardclerk.us">kathleen.prothman@brevardclerk.us</a>

<b>Client Name</b>	Orange County, FL
<b>Scope of Work</b>	ACFR (GFOA Certification) Audit, Constitutional Officer Audits, Enterprise Fund Audits, CRA Audits, CFCC, Landfill Escrow, Federal & State Single Audit
<b>Date</b>	2001 - Present
<b>Engagement Partner(s)</b>	Brian Liffick, Lauren Strobe
<b>Total Hours</b>	3,500
<b>Primary Office Location(s)</b>	Central Florida
<b>Name and Telephone of Client contact</b>	Laurie Bauer, Director of Finance and Accounting 407.836.5719 <a href="mailto:Laurie.Bauer@occompt.com">Laurie.Bauer@occompt.com</a>



<b>Name of Client</b>	Charlotte County, FL
<b>Scope of Work</b>	External Audit Services including ACFR (GFOA Certification), CRA Audits, CFCC, Landfill Escrow, Federal & State Single Audit
<b>Date</b>	2012 - Present
<b>Engagement Partners/Mangers/Specialists/Supervisory Staff</b>	Brian Liffick, Lauren Strobe
<b>Total Hours</b>	1,300
<b>Primary Office Location(s)</b>	Central Florida
<b>Name &amp; Telephone of Principal Client Contact</b>	Stacy Wear, Finance Director 941.743.1436 <a href="mailto:Stacy.Wear@charlotteclerk.com">Stacy.Wear@charlotteclerk.com</a>

## TAB 5 – Cost Proposal

**A. Pricing information relative to performing the audit engagement as described in this request for proposals. The total all-inclusive maximum price bid is to contain all direct and indirect costs, including all out-of-pocket expenses. B. A total all-inclusive maximum price for each of the 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, and 2029 engagements, along with the signature of an individual empowered to represent the firm and sign a contract with the City. The fees for the audit of the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) financial statements and the EMS audit as described in Section 4.A.11. of this RFP should be identified separately for each year.**

We understand and appreciate your desire for professional service providers who are not only highly qualified, but who are also cost-conscious and cost-effective about the work they perform. We are mindful that cost is always a consideration in selecting a professional services firm. Accordingly, we have structured our fee based on our strong desire to develop a mutually rewarding, long-term relationship.

Our fees are generally based on the time required to complete the work at our established billing rates, plus clerical and computer charges and out-of-pocket expenses. Our fees are also based on other factors such as the complexity of the work, the skill required, time limits, the experience and abilities of our personnel, and the value of the services rendered.

Service	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
City of Clearwater Financial Statement Audit in Accordance with <i>Government Auditing Standards</i> & Uniform Guidance for the Year Ending September 30	\$138,500	\$141,960	\$145,515	\$149,150	\$152,880
Clearwater Community Redevelopment Agency Financial Statement Audit in Accordance with <i>Government Auditing Standards</i> for the Year Ending September 30	\$8,500	\$8,715	\$8,930	\$9,155	\$9,380
Emergency Medical Services Financial Statement Audit in Accordance with <i>Government Auditing Standards</i> for the Year Ending September 30	\$3,000	\$3,075	\$3,150	\$3,230	\$3,310
<b>Total Not-to-Exceed Fees</b>	<b>\$150,000</b>	<b>\$153,750</b>	<b>\$157,595</b>	<b>\$161,535</b>	<b>\$165,570</b>

### Certification

As a Partner of the Firm, Lauren Strope is entitled to represent Cherry Bekaert, empowered to submit the bid, and authorized to sign a contract with the City.



**Lauren Strope**

Partner, Cherry Bekaert LLP

Partner, Cherry Bekaert Advisory LLC

## Additional Details

- ▶ Please Note: “Cherry Bekaert” is the brand name under which Cherry Bekaert LLP and Cherry Bekaert Advisory LLC, independently owned entities, provide professional services in an alternative practice structure in accordance with applicable professional standards. Cherry Bekaert Advisory LLC is not a licensed CPA firm. Cherry Bekaert LLP is a licensed CPA firm that provides attest services, and Cherry Bekaert Advisory LLC and its subsidiary entities provide business advisory and non-attest services. For more details, visit [cbh.com/disclosure](http://cbh.com/disclosure).
- ▶ Future year increases beyond the fee commitment shown will be adjusted to annual cost of living increases, assuming there are no significant changes to the scope of work and engagement.
- ▶ A change in fees will apply should the scope of work change significantly. Should this occur, or there is a change in scope because of a change in your operations, we would meet with you to obtain your agreement on any increase in the fee ranges before proceeding.
- ▶ These fees represent our good faith estimate based upon our experience and current understanding of your company and scopes of work. If we have misunderstood the scope requirements or company structure in any way, we are happy to reassess fees and present an updated cost proposal.

## Start Up Costs

The proposed fees do not include the additional time we expect to establish our understanding of the City, get introduced with your personnel and become familiar with the structure and allocation criteria. This effort typically amounts to 15 – 25% more hours in the first service year. We will absorb this additional time as an investment in the long-term relationship with the City.

## Out-of-Scope Services

We encourage open lines of communication throughout the year as part of our services. Generally, we do not bill for routine telephone consultations, including calls received during the year regarding tax and compliance questions.

However, should a matter require major research or services not included above, we will bill for these services at established hourly rates as rendered. Before beginning any additional work outside the scope of this proposal, we will discuss anticipated fees with your management to obtain understanding and approval, as well as any anticipated discount based on the timing and complexity of the service.


***C. Progress payments will be made based on hours of work completed during the course of the engagement in accordance with an agreement reached during contract negotiations. Interim billings shall cover a period of not less than a calendar month. Twenty percent (20%) of the total annual contract will be retained pending delivery and acceptance of the firm’s final reports.***

Cherry Bekaert understands the above requirements. Our professional staff enter time daily in our practice management system where a project code is configured specifically for the City services. We monitor time on a weekly basis and bill monthly, generally at the conclusion of the calendar month. Invoices are calculated based on the rates and hours incurred as recorded in our practice management system. Progress bills will include the hours completed to date. Invoices are payable upon presentation. We do understand that twenty percent (20%) of the total annual contract will be retained pending delivery and acceptance of our final reports.

# Appendix - Firm License

Cherry Bekaert is currently licensed under Section 473.3101, Florida Statutes. The Florida license number issued by the Florida Department of Business & Professional Regulation is AD0010078.

THE OFFICIAL SITE OF THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS & PROFESSIONAL REGULATION



Florida  
**dbpr**  
Department of Business  
& Professional Regulation

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8:47:41 AM 4/25/2024

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**LICENSEE DETAILS**

**Licensee Information**

Name:	CHERRY BEKAERT LLP (Primary Name)
Main Address:	3800 GLENWOOD AVENUE SUITE 200 RALEIGH North Carolina 27612
License Mailing:	3800 GLENWOOD AVENUE SUITE 200 RALEIGH NC 27612
License Location:	800 N MAGNOLIA AVE SUITE 1300 ORLANDO FL 32803
County:	ORANGE

**License Information**

License Type:	FIRM
Rank:	CPA Firms
License Number:	AD0010078
Status:	Current
Licensure Date:	05/02/1978
Expires:	12/31/2025

Special Qualifications	Qualification Effective
Partnership	

**Alternate Names**

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[View Related License Information](#)

[View License Complaint](#)

Our Sunbiz (Division of Corporations) proof of registration is below:



[Department of State](#) / [Division of Corporations](#) / [Search Records](#) / [Search by Entity Name](#) /

### Detail by Entity Name

Foreign Limited Liability Company  
CHERRY BEKAERT ADVISORY LLC

#### Filing Information

<b>Document Number</b>	M22000010348
<b>FEI/EIN Number</b>	88-2730877
<b>Date Filed</b>	07/05/2022
<b>State</b>	DE
<b>Status</b>	ACTIVE

#### Principal Address

3800 GLENWOOD AVENUE, SUITE 200  
RALEIGH, NC 27612

#### Mailing Address

3800 GLENWOOD AVENUE, SUITE 200  
RALEIGH, NC 27612

#### Registered Agent Name & Address

CORPORATION SERVICE COMPANY  
1201 HAYS STREET  
TALLAHASSEE, FL 32301-2525

#### Authorized Person(s) Detail

##### **Name & Address**

Title AUTHORIZED PERSON

THOMPSON, MICHELLE L.  
3800 GLENWOOD AVENUE, SUITE 200  
RALEIGH, NC 27612

Title MEMBER

Cherry Bekaert Guarantor LLC  
3800 GLENWOOD AVENUE, SUITE 200  
RALEIGH, NC 27612





Proposal for Professional Auditing Services

# City of Clearwater, Florida

May 28, 2025 | RFP #32-25

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**Lauren Strobe**

Partner, Cherry Bekaert LLP  
Partner, Cherry Bekaert Advisory LLC

P 813.251.1010

E [lstrobe@cbh.com](mailto:lstrobe@cbh.com)

---

**Brian Liffick**

Partner, Cherry Bekaert LLP  
Partner, Cherry Bekaert Advisory LLC

P 407.423.7911

E [bliffick@cbh.com](mailto:bliffick@cbh.com)

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401 East Jackson Street, Suite 1200, Tampa, FL 33602  
[cbh.com](http://cbh.com)



# Scrutinized Companies Form(s)

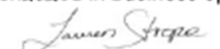
## SCRUTINIZED COMPANIES FORMS

### SCRUTINIZED COMPANIES AND BUSINESS OPERATIONS WITH CUBA AND SYRIA CERTIFICATION FORM

**IF YOUR BID/PROPOSAL IS \$1,000,000 OR MORE, THIS FORM MUST BE COMPLETED AND  
SUBMITTED WITH THE BID/PROPOSAL. FAILURE TO SUBMIT THIS FORM AS REQUIRED MAY  
DEEM YOUR SUBMITTAL NONRESPONSIVE.**

The affiant, by virtue of the signature below, certifies that:

1. The vendor, company, individual, principal, subsidiary, affiliate, or owner is aware of the requirements of section 287.135, Florida Statutes, regarding companies on the Scrutinized Companies with Activities in Sudan List, the Scrutinized Companies with Activities in the Iran Petroleum Energy Sector List, or engaging in business operations in Cuba and Syria; and
2. The vendor, company, individual, principal, subsidiary, affiliate, or owner is eligible to participate in this solicitation and is not listed on either the Scrutinized Companies with Activities in Sudan List, the Scrutinized Companies with Activities in the Iran Petroleum Sector List, or engaged in business operations in Cuba and Syria; and
3. Business Operations means, for purposes specifically related to Cuba or Syria, engaging in commerce in any form in Cuba or Syria, including, but not limited to, acquiring, developing, maintaining, owning, selling, possessing, leasing or operating equipment, facilities, personnel, products, services, personal property, real property, military equipment, or any other apparatus of business or commerce; and
4. If awarded the Contract (or Agreement), the vendor, company, individual, principal, subsidiary, affiliate, or owner will immediately notify the City of Clearwater in writing, no later than five (5) calendar days after any of its principals are placed on the Scrutinized Companies with Activities in Sudan List, the Scrutinized Companies with Activities in the Iran Petroleum Sector List, or engaged in business operations in Cuba and Syria.



Authorized Signature

Lauren Strobe

Printed Name

Partner

Title

Cherry Bekaert LLP

Name of Entity/Corporation

STATE OF FLORIDA

COUNTY OF HILLSBOROUGH

The foregoing instrument was acknowledged before me by means of ☒ physical presence or ☐ online notarization on, this 16<sup>th</sup> day of MAY, 2025, by LAUREN STROBE (name of person whose signature is being notarized) as the PARTNER (title) of CHERRY BEKAERT LLP (name of corporation/entity), personally known ☒, or produced \_\_\_\_\_ (type of identification) as identification, and who did/did not take an oath.



Notary Public

LISA WHITE THOMPSON

Printed Name

My Commission Expires: 2/28/27  
NOTARY SEAL ABOVE



**SCRUTINIZED COMPANIES FORMS****SCRUTINIZED COMPANIES THAT BOYCOTT ISRAEL LIST CERTIFICATION FORM**

**THIS FORM MUST BE COMPLETED AND SUBMITTED WITH THE BID/PROPOSAL.  
FAILURE TO SUBMIT THIS FORM AS REQUIRED MAY DEEM YOUR SUBMITTAL  
NONRESPONSIVE.**

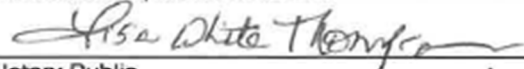
The affiant, by virtue of the signature below, certifies that:

1. The vendor, company, individual, principal, subsidiary, affiliate, or owner is aware of the requirements of section 287.135, Florida Statutes, regarding companies on the Scrutinized Companies that Boycott Israel List, or engaged in a boycott of Israel; and
2. The vendor, company, individual, principal, subsidiary, affiliate, or owner is eligible to participate in this solicitation and is not listed on the Scrutinized Companies that Boycott Israel List, or engaged in a boycott of Israel; and
3. "Boycott Israel" or "boycott of Israel" means refusing to deal, terminating business activities, or taking other actions to limit commercial relations with Israel, or persons or entities doing business in Israel or in Israeli-controlled territories, in a discriminatory manner. A statement by a company that it is participating in a boycott of Israel, or that it has initiated a boycott in response to a request for a boycott of Israel or in compliance with, or in furtherance of, calls for a boycott of Israel, may be considered as evidence that a company is participating in a boycott of Israel; and
4. If awarded the Contract (or Agreement), the vendor, company, individual, principal, subsidiary, affiliate, or owner will immediately notify the City of Clearwater in writing, no later than five (5) calendar days after any of its principals are placed on the Scrutinized Companies that Boycott Israel List, or engaged in a boycott of Israel.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Authorized Signature  
Lauren Strope  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name  
Partner  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Title  
Cherry Bekaert LLP  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Entity/Corporation

STATE OF FLORIDA  
COUNTY OF HILLSBOROUGH

The foregoing instrument was acknowledged before me by means of ☒ physical presence or ☐ online notarization on, this 16<sup>th</sup> day of MAY, 2025, by LAUREN STROPE (name of person whose signature is being notarized) as the PARTNER (title) of CHERRY BEKAERT LLP (name of corporation/entity), personally known ☒ or produced \_\_\_\_\_ (type of identification) as identification, and who did/did not take an oath.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public  
LISA WHITE THOMPSON  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

My Commission Expires: 2/28/27  
NOTARY SEAL ABOVE







Proposal for Professional Auditing Services

# City of Clearwater, Florida

May 28, 2025 | RFP #32-25

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**Lauren Strobe**

Partner, Cherry Bekaert LLP  
Partner, Cherry Bekaert Advisory LLC

P 813.251.1010

E [lstrobe@cbh.com](mailto:lstrobe@cbh.com)

---

**Brian Liffick**

Partner, Cherry Bekaert LLP  
Partner, Cherry Bekaert Advisory LLC

P 407.423.7911

E [bliffick@cbh.com](mailto:bliffick@cbh.com)

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401 East Jackson Street, Suite 1200, Tampa, FL 33602  
[cbh.com](http://cbh.com)

# Compliance with Anti-Human Trafficking Laws Form

## Compliance with Anti-Human Trafficking Laws

Pursuant to Section 787.06 (13), Florida Statutes, this form must be completed by an officer or representative of a non-governmental entity when a contract is executed, renewed, or extended between the non-governmental entity and the City of Clearwater.

The undersigned, on behalf of the entity listed below ("Entity"), hereby attests under penalty of perjury that:

Entity does not use coercion for labor or services as defined in Section 787.06, Florida Statutes.

The undersigned is authorized to execute this form on behalf of Entity.

Date: May 28, 2025

Entity: Cherry Bekaert LLP

Signed: 

Name: Lauren Strope

Title: Partner





Proposal for Professional Auditing Services

# City of Clearwater, Florida

May 28, 2025 | RFP #32-25

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**Lauren Strobe**

Partner, Cherry Bekaert LLP  
Partner, Cherry Bekaert Advisory LLC

P 813.251.1010

E [lstrobe@cbh.com](mailto:lstrobe@cbh.com)

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**Brian Liffick**

Partner, Cherry Bekaert LLP  
Partner, Cherry Bekaert Advisory LLC

P 407.423.7911

E [bliffick@cbh.com](mailto:bliffick@cbh.com)

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401 East Jackson Street, Suite 1200, Tampa, FL 33602  
[cbh.com](http://cbh.com)

# W-9 Form

<b>Form W-9</b> (Rev. October 2018) Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service	<b>Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification</b> ▶ Go to <a href="http://www.irs.gov/FormW9">www.irs.gov/FormW9</a> for instructions and the latest information.	<b>Give Form to the requester. Do not send to the IRS.</b>
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Print or type. See Specific Instructions on page 3.	<b>1</b> Name (as shown on your income tax return). Name is required on this line; do not leave this line blank. <b>Cherry Bekaert LLP</b>	
	<b>2</b> Business name/disregarded entity name, if different from above	
	<b>3</b> Check appropriate box for federal tax classification of the person whose name is entered on line 1. Check only one of the following seven boxes. <input type="checkbox"/> Individual/sole proprietor or single-member LLC <input type="checkbox"/> C Corporation <input type="checkbox"/> S Corporation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partnership <input type="checkbox"/> Trust/estate <input type="checkbox"/> Limited liability company. Enter the tax classification (C=C corporation, S=S corporation, P=Partnership) ▶ _____ <small>Note: Check the appropriate box in the line above for the tax classification of the single-member owner. Do not check LLC if the LLC is classified as a single-member LLC that is disregarded from the owner unless the owner of the LLC is another LLC that is not disregarded from the owner for U.S. federal tax purposes. Otherwise, a single-member LLC that is disregarded from the owner should check the appropriate box for the tax classification of its owner.</small> <input type="checkbox"/> Other (see instructions) ▶ _____	<b>4</b> Exemptions (codes apply only to certain entities, not individuals; see instructions on page 3): Exempt payee code (if any) _____ Exemption from FATCA reporting code (if any) _____ <small>(Applies to accounts maintained outside the U.S.)</small>
	<b>5</b> Address (number, street, and apt. or suite no.) See instructions. <b>3800 Glenwood Avenue, Suite 200</b>	<b>Requester's name and address (optional)</b>
	<b>6</b> City, state, and ZIP code <b>Raleigh, NC 27612</b>	
	<b>7</b> List account number(s) here (optional)	

<b>Part I Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN)</b> Enter your TIN in the appropriate box. The TIN provided must match the name given on line 1 to avoid backup withholding. For individuals, this is generally your social security number (SSN). However, for a resident alien, sole proprietor, or disregarded entity, see the instructions for Part I, later. For other entities, it is your employer identification number (EIN). If you do not have a number, see <i>How to get a TIN</i> , later. <small>Note: If the account is in more than one name, see the instructions for line 1. Also see <i>What Name and Number To Give the Requester</i> for guidelines on whose number to enter.</small>	
	<b>Social security number</b> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; text-align: center;"> <span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 20px;"></span> <span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 20px;"></span> <span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 20px;"></span> <span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 20px;"></span> <span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 20px;"></span> <span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 20px;"></span> <span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 20px;"></span> <span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 20px;"></span> </div>
OR	
	<b>Employer identification number</b> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; text-align: center;"> <span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 20px; text-align: center;">5</span> <span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 20px; text-align: center;">6</span> <span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 20px; text-align: center;">-</span> <span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 20px; text-align: center;">0</span> <span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 20px; text-align: center;">5</span> <span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 20px; text-align: center;">7</span> <span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 20px; text-align: center;">4</span> <span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 20px; text-align: center;">4</span> <span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 20px; text-align: center;">4</span> <span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 20px; text-align: center;">4</span> </div>

<b>Part II Certification</b> Under penalties of perjury, I certify that: 1. The number shown on this form is my correct taxpayer identification number (or I am waiting for a number to be issued to me); and 2. I am not subject to backup withholding because: (a) I am exempt from backup withholding, or (b) I have not been notified by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) that I am subject to backup withholding as a result of a failure to report all interest or dividends, or (c) the IRS has notified me that I am no longer subject to backup withholding; and 3. I am a U.S. citizen or other U.S. person (defined below); and 4. The FATCA code(s) entered on this form (if any) indicating that I am exempt from FATCA reporting is correct. <b>Certification instructions.</b> You must cross out item 2 above if you have been notified by the IRS that you are currently subject to backup withholding because you have failed to report all interest and dividends on your tax return. For real estate transactions, item 2 does not apply. For mortgage interest paid, acquisition or abandonment of secured property, cancellation of debt, contributions to an individual retirement arrangement (IRA), and generally, payments other than interest and dividends, you are not required to sign the certification, but you must provide your correct TIN. See the instructions for Part II, later.
---

<b>Sign Here</b>	Signature of U.S. person ▶ <u>Parale White</u>	Date ▶ <u>1/4/2023</u>
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<b>General Instructions</b> Section references are to the Internal Revenue Code unless otherwise noted. <b>Future developments.</b> For the latest information about developments related to Form W-9 and its instructions, such as legislation enacted after they were published, go to <a href="http://www.irs.gov/FormW9">www.irs.gov/FormW9</a> . <b>Purpose of Form</b> An individual or entity (Form W-9 requester) who is required to file an information return with the IRS must obtain your correct taxpayer identification number (TIN) which may be your social security number (SSN), individual taxpayer identification number (ITIN), adoption taxpayer identification number (ATIN), or employer identification number (EIN), to report on an information return the amount paid to you, or other amount reportable on an information return. Examples of information returns include, but are not limited to, the following. • Form 1099-INT (interest earned or paid)	• Form 1099-DIV (dividends, including those from stocks or mutual funds) • Form 1099-MISC (various types of income, prizes, awards, or gross proceeds) • Form 1099-B (stock or mutual fund sales and certain other transactions by brokers) • Form 1099-S (proceeds from real estate transactions) • Form 1099-K (merchant card and third party network transactions) • Form 1098 (home mortgage interest), 1098-E (student loan interest), 1098-T (tuition) • Form 1099-C (canceled debt) • Form 1099-A (acquisition or abandonment of secured property) Use Form W-9 only if you are a U.S. person (including a resident alien), to provide your correct TIN. If you do not return Form W-9 to the requester with a TIN, you might be subject to backup withholding. See What is backup withholding, later.
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