

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
FROM: PATRICK STREETER, SENIOR PLANNER
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
SUBJECT: PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH DYETT &
BHATIA, URBAN AND REGIONAL PLANNERS – DOWNTOWN
STATION AREA SPECIFIC PLAN UPDATE

AGENDA ACTION: RESOLUTION

RECOMMENDATION

The Planning and Economic Development Department recommends that the Council, by resolution, approve a Professional Services Agreement with Dyett & Bhatia, Urban and Regional Planners, Oakland, California for preparation of the Downtown Station Area Specific Plan Update in an amount not to exceed \$800,000.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On October 9, 2007, the City Council adopted the Downtown Station Area Specific Plan (Specific Plan), which has yielded approximately 100 residential units and 194,000 square-feet of office and retail uses, with approximately 275 residential units and 107,000 square-feet of office and retail uses approved for future development. Midway through the planning period, these numbers are far below the projected the development of 3,409 new dwelling units, 197,500 square-feet of office and institutional uses, and 296,000 square-feet of retail uses by 2027. While a lack of vitality in the downtown can in part be attributed to market forces, feedback has indicated that the Specific Plan is too restrictive, in terms of development standards such as density and height, to finance and fully realize the City's need for high density downtown housing and job centers within walking distance to the Downtown Station. Following the Council's designation of downtown housing as a top priority, the City applied for a Planning Grant Program through the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), which was approved on April 25, 2018. The grant provides funding for an update to the Specific Plan to address land use and transportation issues, as well as infrastructure needs, associated with intensification of housing development in the downtown.

BACKGROUND

On October 9, 2007, the City Council adopted the Downtown Station Area Specific Plan (Specific Plan). The primary objective of the Specific Plan is to increase the number of residents and employees within walking distance (1/2 mile) of the Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) station through the intensification of land uses in the Plan area.

In 2007, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) designated the Downtown Station Area Specific Plan boundaries as a Priority Development Area (PDA). PDAs are areas within existing communities that local governments have identified and approved for future growth. These areas are accessible by one or more transit services, and are often located near established job centers, shopping districts and other services. Santa Rosa has six PDAs: Downtown Station Area, North Santa Rosa Station Area, Roseland, Mendocino Avenue Corridor, Santa Rosa Avenue Corridor, and Sebastopol Road Corridor.

In October 2016, the Council accepted the Housing Action Plan, which was prepared to address the City's ongoing unmet housing needs and to implement the City's General Plan Housing Element.

In October 2017, the City experienced devastating fires, resulting in the loss of nearly 3,000 homes in Santa Rosa. Prior to the fires, the City was already in a housing crisis, with less than 300 units per year being realized each year, compared to the 625 units per year needed to reach the City's goal of 5,000 new housing units by 2023.

On December 14, 2017, MTC notified local governments in the Bay Area of the availability of grant funding for the PDA Planning Grant Program for up to \$800,000 (with a 12% local match). The PDA Grant Planning Program provides financial support for planning processes that seek to intensify land uses by increasing both housing supply, including affordable housing, and jobs, boosting transit ridership, increasing walking, bicycling, carpooling and car-sharing, and retaining and expanding community assets.

On February 13, 2018, the Council adopted a new set of priorities, which includes downtown housing as a Near Term (six month) and Tier 1 top priority.

On March 5, 2018, the City submitted an application to MTC for the PDA Planning Grant Program to amend the existing Specific Plan. The grant would allow the City to comprehensively address land use and transportation issues, as well as infrastructure needs, associated with intensification of housing development in the downtown.

On April 25, 2018, the MTC Commission approved a grant in the amount of \$800,000 to the City of Santa Rosa to update the Downtown Station Area Specific Plan. A match of 12% (\$109,090) is required, which will be provided as in-kind staff time from the Planning and Economic Development Department's existing budget.

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On September 4, 2018, the Council approved a Master Funding Agreement with MTC, accepted the \$800,000 grant to update the Specific Plan, and committed to the requisite local match.

On August 23, 2018, a Request for Proposals (RFP) for consultant services to assist in the drafting of the Specific Plan update was posted and distributed generally. The deadline for responses was identified to be September 24, 2018.

On October 3, 2018, interviews were held with six of the firms that submitted proposals. The interview panel consisted of Council Member Schwedhelm and four members of City staff. Dyett & Bhatia was chosen based on their qualifications, proposed time schedule, budget, and written and oral presentations.

PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

The professional services agreement with Dyett & Bhatia will be funded through the grant award accepted by Council on September 4, 2018.

ANALYSIS

1. The proposed Professional Services Agreement (PSA) involves the preparation of the Downtown Station Area Specific Plan update, which includes preparation and publication of the updated plan and any necessary environmental documents as well as participation at community workshops, local community events, Technical Advisory Committee meetings, Community Advisory Committee meetings, public meetings, and involvement in other innovative outreach methods, as outlined in the attached project scope and schedule.
2. The total project budget is \$909,090 (\$800,000 from the MTC grant, and \$109,090 in an in-kind match from the City's general fund for staff time). The budget for Dyett & Bhatia's work, outlined in the PSA, is \$799,999. In accordance with Council Policy 600-01, Selection of Professional Services, when a contract exceeds \$100,000 it must be approved by the City Council.

FISCAL IMPACT

Funding for the PSA will be provided in its entirety from the MTC grant award.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

This action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it is not a project which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment, pursuant to CEQA Guideline section 15378.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Not applicable.

NOTIFICATION

Not applicable.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 - Downtown Station Area Specific Plan study area
- Resolution/Professional Services Agreement with Dyett & Bhatia

CONTACT

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