

CITY OF SANTA ROSA  
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL  
FROM: GABE OSBURN, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT  
SUBJECT: SOUTH SANTA ROSA SPECIFIC PLAN PROFESSIONAL  
SERVICES AGREEMENT

AGENDA ACTION: RESOLUTION

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RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Planning and Economic Development Department that the Council, by resolution: 1) approve the Professional Services Agreement (PSA) with Dyett & Bhatia, Urban and Regional Planners, Oakland, California, for public engagement, planning, and environmental review services for a twenty-two month period to prepare the South Santa Rosa Specific Plan and Environmental Impact Report in an amount not to exceed \$765,272; and 2) authorize the Chief Financial Officer to establish appropriations of \$104,428 with the source of funds being the Planning and Economic Development's Advance Planning Fund.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission/Association of Bay Area Governments (MTC/ABAG) awarded the City a \$1,200,000 Planning grant for preparation of a Specific Plan and Environmental Impact Report (EIR) in south Santa Rosa. The area encompasses roughly 1,900 acres, including approximately 1,400 acres of unincorporated County land, the area south of Highway 12 and east of Highway 101, extending to Petaluma Hill Road, and south to the urban growth boundary (UGB) incorporating both sides of Highway 101. On January 4, 2024, the Council approved a resolution for a PSA with 4Leaf, Inc., for an amount not to exceed \$1,000,000, with the remaining \$200,000 of the grant funding allocated for City staff costs related to the project, as permitted by the grant terms.

The South Santa Rosa Specific Plan project commenced in January 2024 with 4Leaf providing consultant services. The PSA was ultimately terminated in December 2024 due to the inability of 4Leaf to fulfill its established contractual obligations

Dyett & Bhatia received the second highest rating during the original competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) process that took place in winter of 2023. Dyett & Bhatia

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has worked on many policy documents in the region, including the City's recent update to the Downtown Station Area Specific Plan, which won an Award of Excellence from the California Chapter of the American Planning Association. Staff is recommending a new PSA with Dyett & Bhatia for Council consideration.

The City has approximately \$660,844 remaining in grant funding for the South Santa Rosa Specific Plan and EIR. Dyett & Bhatia has proposed a budget of \$765,272 to complete the project, which exceeds the City's remaining budget by \$104,428. The source of the remaining funds will be the Planning and Economic Development Department's Advance Planning Fund.

### BACKGROUND

In September 2008, the City applied for a new Priority Development Area (PDA) for the Mendocino Avenue/Sebastopol Avenue corridors. The PDA was established primarily to create gateways into the downtown area, create a "sense of place" along both Mendocino and Santa Rosa Avenues, and to connect the Santa Rosa Junior College in a substantial way to the downtown area through improved transit infrastructure.

In September 2019, the City re-established the PDA in order to analyze residential density, non-residential intensity and multi-modal circulation along the PDA corridors during the General Plan Update process. Also in 2019, Sonoma County established the South Santa Rosa Area PDA in order to gain access to regional funding dedicated to planning and infrastructure improvements.

The PDA program is a voluntary partnership between local governments and MTC/ABAG. Through the PDA program, local governments identify areas envisioned for future housing and job growth that are served by transit. Bay Area cities have nominated 218 PDAs since 2007.

PDAs facilitate coordinated regional planning for future growth and transportation investment. In addition to shaping the location of anticipated growth and major transit investments, PDAs receive a dedicated share of funding for local planning and for transportation improvements such as complete streets, bikeways, and parking programs. This is reflected in Plan Bay Area 2050, the region's current long-range land use and transportation plan.

On December 1, 2022, MTC/ABAG released a Call for Projects for PDA Planning Grants open to local governments with one or more existing PDA. The application deadline was January 23, 2023.

On January 24, 2023, the City Council held a study session to consider City initiated annexation of areas within south Santa Rosa, including Moorland Avenue, Santa Rosa Avenue and the Todd Creek/"2010 area". The study session identified the need to adopt a specific plan in the south Santa Rosa area prior to annexation. At that time, the

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Council indicated general support for pursuing a grant to cover the cost of the specific plan and associated EIR.

On January 30, 2023, the County of Sonoma's Moorland Annexation Ad Hoc Committee met and confirmed their support for the City's submittal of a PDA grant application for a specific plan in south Santa Rosa to include the Moorland area. A resolution of support of the City's PDA grant application was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on April 4, 2023.

On February 23, 2023, City staff submitted a PDA grant application to MTC/ABAG for development of the South Santa Rosa Specific Plan and EIR. The plan area includes both a portion of the City's Mendocino Avenue/Santa Rosa Avenue Corridor PDA and the County's South Santa Rosa Area PDA.

On March 28, 2023, the Council approved and ratified City staff's submittal of an application to the MTC/ABAG for a Priority Development Area Grant for \$1,200,000 to prepare the South Santa Rosa Specific Plan and Environmental Impact Report.

On June 28, 2023, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission authorized funding for the South Santa Rosa Specific Plan and EIR in the amount of \$1,200,000, through Resolution No. 4505 Revised.

On January 9, 2024, the Council approved a Professional Services agreement with 4Leaf, Inc. in the amount of \$1,000,000 for the preparation of the South Santa Rosa Specific Plan.

On January 9, 2024, the Council authorized the Chief Financial Officer to pay all claims for services performed under this agreement from project JL Key 08070 – South Santa Rosa Specific Plan and appropriate expenditures of \$1.2M in JL key 08070 and offsetting grant revenue to be received in the General Fund 1100-4426.

In January 2024, the South Santa Rosa Specific Plan project commenced which resulted in the preparation and Council adoption of a Community Engagement Strategy in April 2024.

Throughout 2024, draft technical background reports on the Specific Plan were developed, which include an Existing Conditions Report, Affordable Housing and Anti-Displacement Strategy, a Plan Area Profile, and Market Demand Analysis.

During 2024, the Specific Plan Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was formed. The TAC includes both internal and outside agency staff members which provide technical review and comment on Specific Plan deliverables.

During September and October of 2024, the Specific Plan Engagement Advisory Committee (EAC) was formed. The EAC is comprised of Plan area residents and business owners, who were selected by City staff after a review of 37 applications. The

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role of the EAC is to work with the project team to support community engagement, with members sharing upcoming engagement opportunities and bringing input to City staff.

During October 2024, the City held three community workshops within the Plan area to engage members of the public and identify areas of issue and opportunity.

On December 4, 2024, after several months of attempting to resolve ongoing concerns, the City terminated the PSA with 4Leaf, Inc.

In December 2024, Planning staff contacted Dyett & Bhatia requesting an updated scope, budget, and schedule to complete the Specific Plan and EIR. Dyett & Bhatia was identified as the second highest rated consultant in the original competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) process that took place in winter of 2023.

#### PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

Not applicable.

#### ANALYSIS

The proposed Professional Services Agreement (PSA) involves completing the South Santa Rosa Specific Plan, which includes drafting and publication of the plan, any necessary environmental documents, as well as participation at community workshops, local community events, Technical Advisory Committee meetings, Engagement Advisory Committee meetings, public meetings, and involvement in other innovative outreach methods, as outlined in the attached project scope and schedule.

Between the PDA grant funds expended by 4LEAF to date, coupled with staff's successful use of the City's remaining Local Early Action Planning (LEAP) grant funds for this project, the City has approximately \$660,844 remaining in grant funding. Dyett & Bhatia has proposed a budget of \$765,272 to complete the project, which exceeds the City's remaining budget by \$104,428. The source of the remaining funds will be the Planning and Economic Development Department's Advance Planning Fund.

The original project schedule identified a completion date of January 2026. As a result of the delays in deliverables, the project now has an expected completion date of early fall 2026. Staff will be working diligently to ensure that the project remains on track to meet the new completion date.

#### FISCAL IMPACT

The cost of the South Santa Rosa Specific Plan and EIR PSA with Dyett & Bhatia is not to exceed \$765,272 with the source of reimbursement funds being the previously appropriated \$1,200,000 grant from MTC/ABAG. Based on the cost of Specific Plan work completed to date, there is a need above the remaining grant funds to complete the project. As such, it is being requested that the Chief Financial Officer establish

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appropriations of \$104,428 with the source of funds being the Planning and Economic Development's Advance Planning Fund JL Key 08015. The Advance Planning Fund was created to develop and/or update land use policy documents, including Specific Plans. Therefore, there will be no impact to the General Fund.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378, the proposed action is not a "project" subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it does not have a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment. In the alternative, the proposed action is exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) because it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the project may have a significant effect on the environment.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Not applicable.

NOTIFICATION

Not applicable.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 – South Santa Rosa Specific Plan Study Area
- Resolution/Exhibit A – Professional Services Agreement with Dyett & Bhatia, Urban and Regional Planners

PRESENTER

Conor McKay, Senior Planner  
Planning and Economic Development Department