

CITY OF SANTA ROSA  
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL  
FROM: GABE OSBURN, ACTING PLANNING AND ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR  
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 with 4Leaf, Inc. for public engagement, planning, and environmental review services for a two-year period to prepare the South Santa Rosa Specific Plan and Environmental Impact Report in an amount not to exceed \$1,000,000; and 2) authorize the Chief Financial Officer to establish appropriations of \$1,200,000, with the source of funds being a \$1,200,000 grant from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission/Association of Bay Area Governments.

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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. This resolution will award a professional services agreement with 4Leaf, Inc., to provide public engagement, planning, and environmental review services to assist the Planning and Economic Development Department with the preparation of the South Santa Rosa Specific Plan and EIR, for an amount not to exceed \$1,000,000. The remaining \$200,000 of the grant funding will be used for City staff costs related to the project, as permitted by the grant terms.

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

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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 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.

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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.

PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

See Background section above.

ANALYSIS

The department conducted a search for a consultant to prepare the South Santa Rosa Specific Plan and EIR following Council Policy 600-01 regarding the selection of professional services. The Request for Proposal (RFP) was posted on August 14, 2023. Applicants had until September 11, 2023 to submit a proposal.

A review board was formed and conducted an analysis on three proposals that were submitted through the RFP process. After a thorough review of the written proposals and conducting consultant interviews, 4Leaf Inc. was selected by the reviewed board to assist with the preparation of the specific plan and EIR.

The proposed Professional Services Agreement (PSA) involves the preparation of 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, Community Advisory Committee meetings, public meetings, and involvement in other innovative outreach methods, as outlined in the attached project scope and schedule.

The total project budget is \$1,200,000 from the MTC/ABAG grant. The budget for 4Leaf Inc.'s work, outlined in the PSA, is \$1,000,000. The remaining \$200,000 will be appropriated for City staff time and utilized consistent with the grant terms.

FISCAL IMPACT

The cost of the South Santa Rosa Specific Plan and EIR PSA with 4Leaf Inc. is not to exceed \$1,000,000, and City staff costs to manage the project are not to exceed \$200,000, totaling a not to exceed amount of \$1,200,000.

While the \$1,200,000 will need to be appropriated from the General Fund, that money will be paid back through reimbursements from MTC/ABAG. Therefore, there will be no impact to the General Fund.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The proposed action is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) and 15378 in that there is no possibility that the implementation of this action may have significant effects on the environment, and no further environmental review is required.

Adoption of the South Santa Rosa Specific Plan will require the preparation of an EIR for certification by the Council in accordance with the CEQA. The recommended agreement includes the preparation of the required EIR.

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 4Leaf, Inc.

PRESENTER

Jessica Jones, Deputy Director - Planning  
Planning and Economic Development Department