



Legislation Text

File #: CON 14-0034, **Version:** 1

TO:

Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

THROUGH:

Mark Danaj, City Manager

FROM:

Richard Thompson, Community Development Director

Laurie Jester, Planning Manager

Angelica Ochoa, Assistant Planner

SUBJECT:

Approval of a Contract with PMC to Develop a Downtown Plan Not-to-Exceed \$100,000 (Community Development Director Thompson).

APPROVE

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the City Council: a) approve a contract with PMC to develop a Downtown Plan for an amount not-to-exceed \$100,000, and b) authorize the carry forward of funds budgeted for this project in Fiscal Year 2013-2014 to Fiscal Year 2014-2015.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

The total cost of the contract with PMC is \$100,000. Funds totaling \$100,000 were budgeted in the Fiscal Year 2013-2014 Community Development Department budget. Since these funds are from the Fiscal Year 2013-2014 budget, Council needs to authorize the carry forward of funds to the Fiscal Year 2014-2015 budget.

The contract includes a standard provision that allows the City Manager to approve additional funding, up to \$10,000, for flexibility for unanticipated expenses, such as additional public outreach or meetings. There are adequate funds in the Community Development Department budget to cover these additional costs if needed.

BACKGROUND:

Downtown Manhattan Beach is the heart of the community and the City has focused significant attention and resources in the area to ensure its on-going viability. The City Council has made the development of a Downtown Plan a priority and appropriated funds to undertake this effort. The Plan will include a review of the zoning and development regulations for the area, design guidelines, parking supply and management, and appropriate mix of uses based on market conditions and an economic assessment of the area. The study will be an action plan looking at where we are and what the future vision of the community is, and will include concept plans and options for Code and design guideline revisions as well as infrastructure and streetscape improvements. The next step in the process is to approve a contract with a firm to provide the technical expertise and services

necessary to prepare a Downtown Plan.

DISCUSSION:

On October 8, 2013, the City Council directed staff to review the commercial regulations for offices, banks and other uses in the Downtown area due to a concern with the composition and mix of uses. A review of the Downtown is also one of the objectives in the City Council six month Strategic Plan (July 2013 - January 2014).

The Planning Commission discussed proposed code changes for Downtown (and the North End) on November 13, 2013. In general, the proposal was to restrict office and bank uses in the core on the main streets in Downtown on the street front/sidewalk level. Office and bank uses were proposed to be permitted above or below the street front/sidewalk level. The Planning Commission did not recommend approval of the proposed changes as they felt there was a need for more community input. The Commission also discussed the possibility of updating the 1998 Downtown Strategic Plan document to address maintaining and enhancing the unique character and future of the Downtown.

On May 20, 2014, the City Council approved a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a consultant to work with staff, the community (business owners, property owners, residents) and other organizations to develop a Downtown Plan that will identify the needs and future development of Downtown Manhattan Beach.

The new Downtown Plan is intended to achieve the following goals, as listed in the RFP:

- Create a strong sense of community identity and sense of place
- Preserve small town feel and village atmosphere
- Provide the best mix of retail, commercial and service businesses
- Boost the attractiveness of the Downtown for local residents and visitors
- Enhance vibrancy and economic vitality of the district
- Set the stage for business success
- Reinforce retail, entertainment, dining and active street fronts in the Downtown to provide an attractive pedestrian oriented environment

The RFP was released and two responses were received. Planning and Public Works staff, and representatives from the Downtown Business Professional Association (DBPA) and the Chamber of Commerce interviewed the two consulting firms and their teams of sub-consultants, PMC and Mainstreet Architects and Planners, Inc.

Each of the two firms had a great deal of experience, but staff, the DBPA and the Chamber of Commerce felt that PMC was more qualified and had a better understanding of the proposal and goals of the project. PMC has a thorough and detailed understanding of the City's Downtown, the community's concerns, the history, the challenges and the opportunities. They also have prior experience in developing downtown plans with other cities in California such as Huntington Beach, Santa Rosa, Logan, and Chico, as well as Mesa, Arizona. They have an experienced team of specialists and sub-consultants that would lead the project with community outreach, economics/municipal finance, parking, urban and streetscape design, and Downtown visioning. The firm has a number of recent American Planning Association (APA) award-winning downtown and district plans.

The City anticipates considerable public, property owner and business interest in this effort. Staff held a Town Hall community meeting on June 5, 2014 to kick off the development of the Downtown Plan. There was a strong attendance with over 60 residents, business owners and property owners that provided valuable input. A Downtown Plan webpage with a link from the City's home page has been created to provide easy access to information. The Manhattan Beach Forum/SpeakUp Manhattan Beach component of the City's website has been used and will continue to be utilized as one of the means to spur interest and to engage input on the project.

CONCLUSION:

Staff is recommending that the City Council award a contract to PMC for the preparation of a Downtown Plan in the amount not to exceed \$100,000, with the provision for up to an additional \$10,000 subject to City Manager approval. Additionally, staff recommends that the City Council carry forward the Fiscal Year 2013-2014 funds to the Fiscal Year 2014-2015 budget. This is a limited budget for this work effort and will be the first step and provide a framework towards implementation of the communities' goals. Additional study and funding is anticipated in the future after completion of the Plan, for Code and Design Guideline Amendments as well as detailed infrastructure and streetscape plans, which will require prior City Council approval.

Since the timeline for the development of a Downtown Plan is anticipated to be about nine months plus follow-up Code and other guideline amendments, staff feels there is a need to introduce an Interim Zoning Ordinance to clearly define the allowed or limitation on uses for the Downtown. Interim regulations are generally enacted to call a "timeout" when a contemplated general plan, specific plan or zoning proposal which the city intends, or plans to study within a reasonable prior of time is being evaluated.

As a separate item at tonight's meeting, the City Attorney will be introducing an Interim Zoning Ordinance that will present options for the regulation of uses for the Downtown. Some of the options to be considered will include:

- A restriction on ground level offices and banks,
- A restriction on all new offices and bank uses, or
- A Use Permit requirement for offices and banks, or

If the Interim Zoning Ordinance is approved tonight, the item will return on August 19th at a noticed City Council public hearing.

Attachments:

1. Agreement for Professional Services Revised
2. Exhibit A- Proposal from PMC - June 19, 2014
3. Downtown Plan Area Map
4. Downtown Visioning Forum Agenda/Notes, June 5, 2014
5. Downtown Visioning Forum Attendees, Thursday, June 5, 2014