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Staff Report for the Upcoming General Plan and Housing Element Update Process

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The City plans to undertake an open and competitive process to select a qualified and experienced consulting firm to prepare the upcoming General Plan and Housing Element Updates. The updates to the General Plan and Housing Element will occur over the next two or more years. Funding is included in the FY2013-2015 budget.

This report is for your information only, and no action is required.

BACKGROUND

State law recommends the General Plan be updated every 5 to 10 years, although there is no statutory requirement. The City last updated its General Plan, which covers the time period through 2015, in 2002. The 2002 effort represented a major overhaul and modernization of the prior General Plan and provides a strong foundation for the forthcoming update process to build on. Key new issues which the General Plan Update shall address include the future direction of the industrial area (including recommendations from the recent Next Generation Workplace District Study), impacts from Plan Bay Area and the greenhouse gas emission reductions thresholds under SB 375, and State-mandated issues such as incorporation of Complete Streets policies. Staff anticipates completing the General Plan Update in 2015.

The City last updated its Housing Element in 2010. The statutory deadline for the next Housing Element Update cycle is early 2014. The Housing Element serves as one of the most prominent elements of the General Plan and is the most regulated section. It details the City's progress toward the State-required fair share housing obligations and housing unit production goals by income levels as established by the Association of Bay Area Governments. The update of the Housing Element will occur in 2014 in order to meet the deadline, followed by the General Plan update.

Under an RFP process, City staff will solicit applications from qualified planning firms with a strong track record in completing General Plan and Housing Element Updates in a timely, thorough and publicly inclusive manner. The duration for the open application period shall be at least three weeks. An interdepartmental review team will analyze and evaluate the proposals and interview the top firms. A recommendation and the Consultant Services Agreement will come to the City Council for approval. The project schedule including outreach efforts (i.e., local stakeholder involvement, community meetings, marketing/outreach, bilingual translation, use of the Internet/social media) will be presented at that time.

Below is an outline of the proposed selection schedule:

- Open RFP Application Period (October 2013)
- Submittal Deadline for RFPs (November 2013)
- City Inter-departmental Team Reviews Applications (November 2013)
- Finalist Interviews and Selection of Firm (December 2013)
- City Council Approval of Selected Firm and Contract (January 2014)

Previous Actions

- The City Council certified the Final General Plan EIR and adopted the current General Plan Update on May 6, 2002.
- The City Council adopted the current Housing Element Update on April 5, 2010.

Fiscal Impacts

The City Council approved \$600,000 for the General Plan and Housing Element Updates in the FY2013-15 two year budget: \$300,000 in FY13-14 and \$300,000 in FY14-15. The Community Development Department budget account number for General Plan and Housing Element Update is 010-41-001-5120.

PREPARED BY: Tom Liao, Planning and Housing Manager, Community Development Department