



Legislation Text

File #: 23-251, **Version:** 1

Adopt a Resolution to Approve and Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Consultant Service Agreement for \$149,970.00 with Ready To Launch Research, to Conduct Focus Group Qualitative Research with the Community and Key Stakeholders in English, Mandarin, and Spanish, and with City Staff to Develop a Library Services Strategic Plan Document

COUNCIL PRIORITY

- Infrastructure
- Sustainability & Resiliency
- Community Engagement and Outreach
- Race and Equity Initiatives
- Community & Business Development

SUMMARY

This contract will provide for the qualitative research necessary to develop an accurate strategic direction in the form of a strategic plan as the final output. With that plan the library can best understand and provide for community needs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends the following action: Approve a Consultant Services Agreement with Ready To Launch Research (RTL) for an amount not to exceed \$149,970.00.

BACKGROUND

Even before the pandemic, the library needed to identify how best to serve the community because the needs of the community, the demographics of the community, and the capabilities of libraries have changed over time. Since the pandemic, that need has only increased. Not only have community needs, demographics, and the capabilities of libraries changed, but the world itself has fundamentally changed. Patterns and habits of the community have changed irrevocably. This research and analysis will identify Perception (communication) Gaps, Service Gaps, and Facility Gaps.

Perception Gaps = what do residents think the library does compared to what it actually does. There are likely specific things, collections, programs, and services people want that the library already does that they just don't know about.

Service Gaps = what do residents want from the library that it is not doing or what is it doing that residents no longer find as important? This will provide direction to stop doing, continue doing, or start doing services, programs, collection types, etc.

Facility Gaps = what do residents need from the facility in order for the library to best serve their needs.

By identifying these gaps, a strategic plan will be developed that will provide areas of focus to close those gaps. The strategic plan will provide the big picture direction to best serve the community. A library services vision and mission will be created to guide staff who will come up with the tactical services, programs, collections, etc. to execute on the strategy.

To ensure as many diverse voices as possible are heard, the process will involve 24 focus groups of 8 participants each, representing a rich qualitative data collection set. These focus groups represent different age segments (Teens, Younger Adults, Parents with Current Children, and Seniors) as well as library users and non-users. The library wants to find out what it does well and where to improve for those who use the library, and to find out what's holding people back from using the library for non-users.

This contract also makes efforts to ensure the City captures the voices of different multicultural segments. While most focus groups will be a diverse mix of cultural backgrounds, a specific set of African American/Black cohort of focus groups will also be conducted, led by a culturally appropriate facilitator, to make as much effort as possible for people to be comfortable to speak freely. Furthermore, in recognition that we have a very diverse population, focus groups will be held in Mandarin and Spanish to capture the voices of our residents who don't speak English.

Analysis

Staff recommends the City Council approve and authorize the City Manager to execute this Consultant Service Agreement with RTL to ensure that the strategic plan is in place within FY2024 and actions to achieve the strategy can be put in motion during FY2024, FY2025, and beyond.

Staff investigated other options including doing the research and plan in-house, but it was decided that there was too much room for a biased outcome, and even if it were not, the optics of it might be perceived as biased, which would erode staff and/or community trust in the outcomes. Staff also explored other firms. The specialization of focus group recruitment, qualitative research, and ability to understand libraries is limited. Only one other firm at a similar price was found in the Bay Area to have the understanding of libraries and communities, the capabilities to execute, and the capacity. RTL understood the challenges best and provided the focus group recruitment and facilitation, as well as, the output of the final strategic plan report as a deliverable.

Applicable General Plan Policies

- Policy CSF-3.1 Library Expansion and Upgrades. Support the expansion and upgrading of public library facilities and services to keep pace with changes in information technology and community needs.
 - Action CSF-3.1.A: Library Modernization Continue to pursue the modernization of San Leandro's libraries to incorporate emerging technology and best practices in library design.

- Action CSF-3.1.B: Library Master Plan Consider the development of a Citywide Library System Master Plan.
 - Action CSF-3.1.C: Equipment Acquisition On an ongoing basis, secure funding for technology improvements, hardware, building furnishings, and other upgrades to ensure that the City's libraries remain cutting edge and responsive to public needs.
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- Policy CSF-3.3 Adequate Funding. Ensure that library funding remains adequate to sustain or increase existing service levels, including staffing, programming, and technology upgrades. Maintain or exceed American Library Association standards throughout the City's library system.
 - Policy CSF-3.4 Libraries as Neighborhood Centers. Promote programs and events that affirm the role of the City's libraries as community and neighborhood gathering places and that reflect the City's diverse population.
 - Policy CSF-3.5 Resources for Self-Improvement. Ensure that San Leandro's libraries and other community institutions provide a setting for the open exchange of ideas and information and provide an opportunity for residents of all backgrounds to improve their skills and knowledge.
 - Policy CSF-4.5 Language and Media Diversity. Ensure access to information among those persons without easy access to electronic media, and those persons whose primary language is not English. Information on City facilities and activities, including sports, events, resources, and programs, should be provided in a variety of mediums and languages.
 - Policy CSF-5.2 Child and Family Services. Support the development of child and family services and programs that encourage safe and healthy environments for children and families.
 - Policy CSF-5.4 Inclusive Approach. Promote an inclusive approach to youth services, soliciting participation by individuals as well as the diverse range of organizations serving youth and young adults in the community.
 - Policy CSF-5.8 Services for Older Adults. Support the expansion of older adult services and programs to improve access to critical resources and maintain quality-of-life standards. Access to senior services should be improved through planning, advocacy, and the use of City and other resources to address identified needs.
 - Policy CSF-5.13 Multi-Lingual Information and Cultural Competency. Encourage public agencies to provide services, classes, outreach materials and information to San Leandro residents in multiple formats and languages. Cultural competency is equally important as language access.

Summary of Public Outreach Efforts

By the nature of this study with focus groups with the community, outreach is the end result of executing this Consultant Services Agreement.

Legal Analysis

The City Attorney has reviewed these documents and agreements and approved as to form.

The consultant has agreed to the terms of the contract.

Financial Impacts

Sufficient funds are included in the Fiscal Year 2022-2023 General Fund budget for Library Strategic Planning Services:

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|---|------------------|
| • <u>General Fund-Library, Account 010-68-001-5120:</u> | <u>\$149,970</u> |
| • Total | \$149,970 |

This Council action will not impact fund balance because there are funds available in the FY2022-2023 adopted budget.

ATTACHMENTS

- ***Attachment A: Resolution***
- ***Attachment B: CSA with Ready to Launch Research for a San Leandro Library Strategic Plan including scope of work and compensation.***
- ***Attachment C: Ready to Launch Proposal***
- ***Attachment D: EDWOSB Certification Approval***

PREPARED BY: Brian Simons, Library Director, Library Services Department