



AGENCY: City Council
MEETING DATE: March 27, 2023
DEPARTMENT: Community Development
PRESENTED BY: S. Peters
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AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

110TITLE:

Receive Report and Consider Adoption of City Council Resolution Approving Professional Services Agreement with Walker Consultants to Prepare a Comprehensive Downtown Parking Strategy, and Authorizing City Manager to Execute Contract (Amount Not To Exceed \$67,690; Account No. 110-4320-0319)

ISSUE:

On February 24, 2023, the City received one (1) timely proposal from a parking consulting firm for the preparation of a Comprehensive Downtown Parking Study. Staff reviewed the proposal and recommends that Walker Consultants be selected as the firm for the project rather than sending out a new RFP because Walker Consulting is well qualified to perform the work and has an excellent resume of accomplishments for similar kinds of projects with cities both large and small.

PURPOSE/ANALYSIS:

The purpose of the Downtown Parking Strategy is to perform a comprehensive review and update to the City Central Business District (CBD) land use parking codes in order to address long standing parking issues in the CBD. In 2007, the City performed a Nexus Study which resulted in a Resolution for an in-lieu fee to be collected to off-set parking requirements in the District. These in-lieu fees are intended to be used for maintaining City-owned parking lots to ensure sufficient public parking is available in the District and to offset the reduced parking requirements. In 2011, the in-lieu fee was reduced to 50% and in 2012, a moratorium on the fee collection and parking requirements was established. Now almost 10 years later, the moratorium is still in place and no parking requirements are being utilized for development in the CBD. With no fees being collected, and no established parking requirements available to offset parking impacts, the CBD, which is the heart of the City's downtown is over parked and there are no current plans for navigating a path forward. This study would include a review and update of existing parking codes, consider alternate potential parking lot areas, review the potential for achieving regional transportation goals such as encouraging walking in core pedestrian oriented areas and increasing access to transit stops, evaluation of opportunities for electric vehicle (EV) charging stations, solar canopy lots, and parking meters.

The inefficient management of parking through a piecemeal approach can come at a cost to the quality of life and economic development in a community. One of the primary strategies for successful management of a City's downtown parking needs is to develop a comprehensive parking strategy that is capable of meeting current and future demands and factors in the needs of all community members. This evaluation is an opportunity for the City to rethink how parking and access could be provided to enhance the quality of life and economic development in the Central Business District.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 8B

The submittal prepared by Walker Consulting demonstrates the firm's clear understanding of the tasks at hand and shows that they have the experience and qualifications necessary to achieve the goals and objectives of the project. They have worked with both large and small cities, and their submittal conveys an understanding of the City's approach to balancing the economic, social, and quality of life needs of our community. Walker has conducted studies and prepared plans for many other municipalities including a downtown parking plan and parklet program for the City of Benicia; a downtown vision and policy plan for the City of Winters; a parking plan and in-lieu fee program for the City of Healdsburg; an access and parking management plan for the City of San Luis Obispo; a public parking study for the City of Morro Bay; a downtown parking study for Pismo Beach; and a parking capacity study for the City of Sunnyvale. They have experience with municipal code studies and updates, electric vehicle charging and solar infrastructure, and they have conducted robust community outreach efforts to better understand the existing social, economic and quality of life issues and needs that exist.

Attached to this report is the Request for Proposals (Attachment 2) which established the parameters for the project. Also attached is the Scope of Work, excerpted from the full proposal submitted by Walker Consulting (Attachment 3).

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Adopt Resolution approving Professional Services Agreement with Walker Consultants to prepare a comprehensive Downtown Parking Strategy and authorizing City Manager to execute Contract (Amount Not To Exceed \$67,690; Account No. 121-7999-0799)

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

1. Request additional information.
2. Reject proposal and solicit a new Request for Proposals (RFPs).
3. Provide alternative direction to staff.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This project will be partially funded through an approved MCOG OWP planning grant in the amount of \$57,062.00 and City of Fort Bragg fund 120 (Parking Fund will supplement the additional \$7,178.00). This project was included in the 2022/23 Fiscal Year budget which assumed a cost of \$60,512.00. At the mid-year budget the additional \$7,178.00, was moved to cover the remaining expense.

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACT:

Consultant will travel to Fort Bragg for site visit and community meetings, which will result in small amounts greenhouse gas emissions.

CONSISTENCY:

City of Fort Bragg Inland General Plan –

Element 5 Circulation and 6 Community Design include goals to encourage increased pedestrian activity in the CBD; improve and increase the availability of public parking facilities in the CBD; periodically update the parking in-lieu fee program; improve the appearance and effectiveness of parking facilities; develop comprehensive signage

programs to direct vehicles to off-street parking areas; and improve and update parking regulations in accordance with best practices and smart growth principles.

The proposed parking study incorporates these into one comprehensive strategy that will enable the City to confidently navigate a path forward in a unified and well-planned manner consistent with its stated objectives.

MCOG Regional Transportation Plan Goals and Objectives –

Climate Change and the Environment: Encourage private and public investment in countywide EV charging station network and seek funding to fill gaps in the network. Prioritize transportation projects which lead to reduced greenhouse gas emissions.

The feasibility study for potential parking lots includes evaluation of opportunities for EV charging stations. Both EV charging stations and solar canopy covered parking areas in the CBD will lead to greenhouse gas emission reductions.

State Highway System: Balance the needs for transportation improvements with quality of life for residents and visitors to the region.

The City's Central Business District is centered around State Route 1 (AKA Main Street). The study seeks to analyze potential parking lots accessible to visitors from SR1 to encourage parking and walking into the district.

Active Transportation: Improve property value and strengthen local economies through more accessible commercial and residential areas.

The Central Business District is an existing pedestrian oriented area and strategic placement of public parking areas can promote increased walking and biking while improving access to local small businesses.

Financial Policies: Maximize the effectiveness of transportation funding resources.

This project fulfills multiple RTP goals and objectives, utilizes existing funds to potentially procure parking lots, as well as emphasizes access to the local small businesses and historic district.

Vision Mendocino 2030 Implementation: Encourage infrastructure projects that support the preferred scenario.

This project supports infill growth through identification of vacant parcels with proximity to either the CBD or other transportation modes for potential creation of additional parking lots. It will also improve vehicle operations in already developed areas.

IMPLEMENTATION/TIMEFRAMES:

RFP's Opened – February 24, 2023

Contract Notice to Proceed – TBD

Kick-Off – April 2023

Community Outreach – July-September 2023

Draft Plan, Revisions, Workshop – October–December 2023

Final Plan and Closeout – January 2024

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Resolution Firm Selection for Parking Study
2. Request for Proposals
3. Walker Consultants Scope of Work

NOTIFICATION:

1. Crissy Mancini Nichols, Director-In-Charge, Walker Consultants
2. Ben Weber, Project Manager, Walker Consultants