



**CITY OF SALINAS
COUNCIL STAFF REPORT**

DATE: FEBRUARY 21, 2023

DEPARTMENT: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

FROM: MEGAN HUNTER, DIRECTOR

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TITLE: PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF SALINAS AND URBAN FIELD STUDIO OAKLAND TO PREPARE THE ALISAL DISTRICT IDENTITY MASTER PLAN

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

A motion to approve a resolution authorizing the Mayor to execute an Agreement for Professional Services (Agreement) with Urban Field Studio Oakland (UFS) for a total compensation amount not to exceed \$380,340.00 for the development of the Alisal District Identity Master Plan (ADIMP).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

In November 2019, the City Council unanimously accepted the Alisal Vibrancy Plan (AVP) as a strategic planning document. The AVP is an action-oriented, comprehensive strategy for Salinas' Alisal (East Salinas) neighborhoods. The Plan's purpose is to communicate the collective vision, goals, and desires of those who live, work, worship, and shop in the Alisal. AVP implementation has been focused on five priority areas: appearance, cleanliness, safety and infrastructure, parks and open space and economic development. The establishment of district identity themes, branding, color palette, and commercial corridor, façade and public art design guidelines are AVP actions identified by the community to improve commercial corridor appearance in the Alisal. Staff working collaboratively with the community, prepared a Request for Proposals seeking a consultant team to prepare a district identity master plan for the Alisal and have completed the selection process. Urban Fields Studio Oakland with their subconsultants SWA and Volume Inc is the recommended consultant team.

BACKGROUND:

Request for Proposals

On October 7, 2023, the City released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the preparation of the ADIMP. The RFP, provided as an attachment to this staff report, sought consultants with experience in developing and implementing district identity plans in collaboration with diverse

communities. The primary objective of the ADIMP is to further AVP goals, policies and actions related to the community's identity as a unique cultural, arts and shopping district and to improve the Alisal commercial corridor appearance through greening, gateway elements, banners and signage and public art. The requested ADIMP scope of work included the preparation of a

1. District Identity Theme and Branding Program,
2. Commercial Corridor Guidelines,
3. Façade Design Guidelines, and
4. an Implementation and Maintenance Plan

Consultant Selection

The City received four proposals by the November 7, 2022, deadline. Consultant selection was divided into three phases.

1. City staff reviewed, rated, and ranked the written proposals based on qualifications and experience related to the requested scope of work.
2. The top three firms were selected to move forward to a panel interview. Panelists included a member from the Library and Community Services Commission, AVP Implementation Committee, and the Salinas United Business Association.
3. Staff conducted reference checks on the two highest ranking consultant teams. Prior to final selection, staff debriefed with the community panelists to discuss their rankings.

Panelists and City staff came to a consensus that Urban Field Studio (UFS) met all the requirements of the RFP scope of work and demonstrated community engagement experience. Staff then proceeded to negotiate the final scope of work and budget that is provided as attachment to this staff report.

DISCUSSION:

UFS is a collaborative team of urban designers in the San Francisco Bay Area that visualize conceptual design for future development scenarios. They are skilled architects and planners that demonstrated strong verbal and visual communications within their proposal, most importantly they demonstrated a passion for the public domain. SWA, one of the subconsultants, has been recognized as a world leader in landscape architecture, planning, and urban design. They have experience in preparing regional master plans for urban infill, plazas and parks. Volume Inc, the other subconsultant, is a design studio that focuses on visual communication. Volume Inc has created outdoor campaigns, exhibitions, and most importantly wayfinding programs and placemaking which is a key requirement within the ADIMP.

Scope of Work and Schedule

The complete scope of work and schedule are provided as an attachment to this report. In summary, the preparation of a public review draft ADIMP is projected to take eight months from project kick off. Community engagement will include surveys, pop-ups, and stakeholder and community meetings. In addition, UFS will work with youth and local artists on the

implementation of pilot and demonstration projects during the planning process. Primary deliverables that will become part of the ADIMP include

- Conceptual Design for District Identity themes and branding
- Public Art Guidelines and Plan Outline
- Commercial Corridor Design Concepts
- Commercial Façade Improvement Program Guidelines and Toolkit
- Probable cost and recommended phasing for implementation and maintenance

DEPARTMENT COORDINATION:

Community Development Department staff (Economic Development and Advanced Planning & Project Implementation Divisions) led RFP preparation, consultant selection process, and final ADIMP scope and budget negotiation with the support of Public Works and Library and Community Services staff and community stakeholders. The Legal Department also assisted with finalizing the Agreement for Professional Services.

CEQA CONSIDERATION:

The City of Salinas has determined that the proposed action is not a project as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (CEQA Guidelines Section 15378). In addition, CEQA Guidelines Section 15061 includes the general rule that CEQA applies only to activities which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA. Because the proposed action and this matter have no potential to cause any effect on the environment, or because it falls within a category of activities excluded as projects pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15378, this matter is not a project. Because the matter does not cause a direct or foreseeable indirect physical change on or in the environment, this matter is not a project. Any subsequent discretionary projects resulting from this action will be assessed for CEQA applicability.

STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVE:

The preparation of the ADIMP furthers the City Council Strategic Plan Goals of Economic Development and Infrastructure and Environmental Sustainability. The ADIMP implements AVP priorities related to corridor appearance, cleanliness, and district branding and identity. The ADIMP will provide a cohesive framework for creating an attractive corridor through greening, gateways at City entry points to the Alisal area, public art including murals, and promoting the Alisal as a cultural shopping district.

FISCAL AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:

There is no direct fiscal impact to the General Fund. This Agreement, for a total amount not to exceed \$380,340.00, is fully funded through the Alisal Vibrancy Plan Implementation CIP 9246.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Resolution for Professional Services between the City of Salinas and Urban Field Studio Oakland
 - a. Exhibit A: Agreement for Professional Service with Urban Field Studio Oakland
2. Urban Field Studio Oakland Proposal
 - a. Scope
 - b. Cost Proposal
3. Request for Proposal for Development of the Alisal Vibrancy Plan District Identity Master Plan