



CITY OF SALINAS COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

DATE: JUNE 22, 2021

DEPARTMENT: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

FROM: MEGAN HUNTER, DIRECTOR

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ANGELINE SICKLER, SENIOR PLAN CHECK ENGINEER

TITLE: SERVICE AGREEMENTS FOR CONSULTANT PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

A motion to approve a Resolution authorizing the Mayor to enter into Professional Services Agreements with CSG Consultants, Inc., 4LEAF, Inc. and Bureau Veritas North America, Inc., to provide building official, technical permitting and inspection services to the City's Permit Center through Fiscal Year 2021-22.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council approve the attached Resolution authorizing the Mayor to enter into Professional Services Agreements with CSG Consultants, Inc., 4LEAF, Inc. and Bureau Veritas North America, Inc.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Community Development Department is seeking authorization to enter into Professional Services Agreements with CSG Consultants, Inc., 4LEAF, Inc. and Bureau Veritas North America, Inc. in the amount of \$450,000 for Fiscal Year 2021-22. Contract services are necessary due to increases in workload, staff vacancies and large-scale development projects. Funding comes from permitting fees and requires the Permit Services Division to be efficient and provide specific choices on which projects are addressed through outside services in order to maintain excellent customer service while staying within required timelines. These firms provide services and staff specifically tailored to manage the development process and can provide all levels of building official, plan review, permitting, and inspection services. All contract staff hold the required certifications to conduct the assigned duties. The strategic use of these contractors along with regular staff allows the Division to provide the best service possible. The authorization is limited to \$450,000; the Division only expends the amount needed to provide the service, and all fees are collected from submitted permits and are completely cost recovered prior to permit issuance.

BACKGROUND:

The Permit Services Division, funded through the Permit Center Enterprise Fund, has utilized consulting firms to augment the capacity of the Permit Center for many years and continues to have a close working relationship with these firms. CSG has been contracted with the City since 2000, 4LEAF since 2012, and Bureau Veritas since 2016. These firms have extensive knowledge and experience in providing technical services to building departments throughout multiple jurisdictions in California.

DISCUSSION:

The Agreements with the three consulting firms will allow the Permit Services Division in the Community Development Department (CDD) to be flexible by using contract support to address staffing shortfalls and assist as workload ramps up. Scalable resources are the driver for the Services Agreements and help the Permit Center respond to new applications in a timely manner. The Permit Services Division has been able to fill a second Senior Plan Check Engineer position; however, we still seek to fill the Building Inspector and Building Official positions.

We are temporarily filling the Building Official vacancy with a consultant Interim Building Official (B.O.) The B.O. provides many services such as addressing complex building code issues, code interpretation and resolution of inquiries and complaints, application of all aspects of the California building codes and local amendments, alternative materials and methods approval, staff education, coordination with other divisions and agencies, participation in pre-development reviews, and attending Council or Building Board of Appeals meetings.

Beginning July 1, 2020, Fire Plan Check services were also provided by the consulting firms, largely for the same purpose as Building Plan Review. The scalable resource allows for timely review of applications with minimal staffing.

Large and complex projects pose the greatest issue of balancing staff time to focus on those difficult tasks, while still providing the required customer service for the smaller, less complex projects. In order to balance the time and workload, the Division has been able to utilize the contract workforce for projects such as the Love's Travel Center, the Parkside Phase 1 affordable housing project, North Salinas Valley Mosquito Abatement District Facility, Chick-Fil-A at Northridge Mall, and a new storage facility on Westridge Parkway.

The careful use of contract staff allows Permit Services to stay on top of the ebb and flow of development and stabilize workflow while maintaining limited staffing levels. Additionally, the City can assign specific contract staff to focus on certain projects without the loss or the inability to address the normal workload of the Permit Center.

Permit Services is proposing to renew our Agreements with CSG, 4LEAF and Bureau Veritas because of their expertise and demonstrated ability to provide a full complement of cost effective and efficient services. Because they have been providing permitting services in Salinas for years, their contract staff have knowledge of the City and our customer base and therefore, are able to provide more efficient building official, plan review and inspection, and enhanced customer

service. Contracting with new companies would require additional staff training and would be more expensive. Moreover, there are no vendors within the City of Salinas or the County of Monterey that can perform this level of work, and while we are always searching for local preferred providers, staff must contract with companies outside of this jurisdiction.

The costs of past service agreements have been \$290,718 for FY 2017/18, \$504,465 for FY 2018/19, \$426,469 for FY 2019/20, and \$225,714 for FY 2020-21. The decrease in consultant spending for the current year is due to the additional assistance from the second Senior Plan Check Engineer, the Interim Building Official and the Senior Combination Building Inspector. FY 2021-22 is again budgeted for \$450,000. In July of 2017, the Permit Services Division was placed into an Enterprise Fund and all fees associated with the cost of services by the proposed agencies will be fully covered within the Fund.

CEQA CONSIDERATION:

Not a Project. 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).

OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCIES:

The use of contract staff supports City Council's goal of Operational Efficiencies and will enhance permit center operations and facilitate community development in the City.

DEPARTMENTAL COORDINATION:

The Services Agreements for Consultant Professional Services is a collaborative effort among the Community Development Department (Permit Services), Fire Prevention Bureau, City Attorney's Office, and Finance Department.

FISCAL AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:

The cost incurred from contract staff is covered through the Permit Center Enterprise Fund and no fees are taken from the General Fund or any other accounts.

ATTACHMENTS:

Resolution
Consultant Service Agreements (3)
Consultant Rate Proposals (3)