



Building A Better Long Beach

Item 5

April 7, 2008

REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY BOARD MEMBERS
City of Long Beach
California

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve and authorize the Executive Director to enter into a contract with EDAW AECOM Consultants, Inc. in an amount not to exceed \$600,000 for the preparation of a Downtown Community Plan and Program Environmental Impact Report and increase appropriations for the Central and Downtown Redevelopment Project Areas. (Central and Downtown – Districts 1, 2)

DISCUSSION

In 2006, a Downtown Visioning Committee (Committee) appointed by the First and Second City Council Districts developed a vision for the downtown area, bounded by Alamitos Avenue, 10th Street, the Los Angeles River and the Pacific Ocean. The resulting Vision Statement (Vision) was presented to the public, the Planning Commission, the Redevelopment Agency Board, and the City Council in the summer of 2007. On August 21, 2007, the City Council approved a recommendation for the creation of a Downtown Community Plan (Plan) to achieve the Committee's vision.

The Plan will be a comprehensive blueprint for the development of the downtown area utilizing the Vision as its basis. Through flexible zoning and well-thought-out development standards, it will seek to achieve a land use mix that promotes a vital economy. It will encourage quality urban design, higher-density development supported by nearby transit, and mobility via a variety of modes. The Plan will include sustainability programs and place-making components that foster a truly urban environment, which incorporates streetscapes, open space, and public art.

After extensive research into the downtown planning efforts of other cities, staff has concluded that collaborative and cooperative processes have yielded the most effective plans. Extensive public outreach and an interactive working relationship between consultants, staff and key members of the public have been a part of every successful recent planning program.

THE CITY OF LONG BEACH REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

333 West Ocean Blvd., Long Beach, CA 90802 T: 562.570.6615 F: 562.570.6215 rda.longbeach.gov

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To bring about such a collaborative effort, it is recommended that the Redevelopment Agency enter into a direct contract with EDAW AECOM Consultants, Inc. (EDAW) for preparation of a Downtown Community Plan and Program Environmental Impact Report (Program EIR) in an amount not to exceed \$600,000. The cost will be shared proportionately between the Central and Downtown Redevelopment Project Areas.

EDAW is a multi-national consulting firm with extensive internal resources. EDAW and their urban design sub-consultant, CityWorks Design (the EDAW Team), have significant experience with similar projects including the Downtown San Diego Specific Plan and Smart Growth Incentive Program, Design for a Livable Downtown (Los Angeles), and the Glendale Specific Plan. The City of Long Beach is currently working with the EDAW Team in the preparation of the Long Beach 2030 General Plan Update, of which the Downtown Community Plan will be a component. Integration and consistency among the component plans and umbrella plan is critical.

A six-month schedule is anticipated for preparation of the draft plan. Public participation will include a steering committee consisting of three to five members of the downtown community. Several broader public workshops are also planned. The final products will include a highly graphic Downtown Community Plan with urban design and development illustrations, as well as a Program EIR that will allow individual projects that conform to the Plan to be more expeditiously entitled.

The Fiscal Year 2008 Budget does not include the adequate appropriations for this project. It is recommended that the appropriations for the Central Redevelopment Project Area be increased by \$200,000 and the appropriation for the Downtown Redevelopment Project Area be increased by \$300,000. Fiscal Year 2008 tax increment revenue will be greater than estimated and will cover the additional appropriations.

SUGGESTED ACTION:

Adopt recommendation.

Respectfully submitted,



CRAIG BECK
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

CB:DSW:JMV:jmv/slg