



# CITY OF COMMERCE AGENDA REPORT

**TO:** Honorable City Council

**FROM:** City Administrator

**SUBJECT:** A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COMMERCE AWARDING A CONTRACT TO MOORE IACOFANO GOLTSMAN, INC. (MIG) FOR THE PREPARATION OF A COMPREHENSIVE UPDATE TO THE GENERAL PLAN AND ZONING ORDINANCE, AND THE PREPARATION OF THE RELATED ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (EIR)

**MEETING DATE:** April 10, 2018

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## **RECOMMENDATION:**

Adopt a Resolution awarding a contract to Moore Iacofano Goltsman, Inc. (MIG) for the preparation of a comprehensive update to the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance, and the preparation of the related Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

## **BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:**

### Selection Process

In October of 2017, in response to the release of a Request For Proposals (RFP), the City of Commerce received five proposals from consultants interested in helping the City update its General Plan and Zoning Ordinance, as well as prepare the necessary Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the work. The five proposals were submitted by the following firms:

- 1) MIG
- 2) De Novo Planning Group
- 3) Blodgett Baylosis
- 4) Civic Solutions
- 5) CSG

Public Works & Development Services staff members interviewed teams from each of the five consulting firms, and then selected the three highest rated firms to be interviewed by the City Administrator and Economic Development Subcommittee. At the conclusion of the interview process, MIG was unanimously selected as the firm most qualified for the subject project. The cost for their services is \$1,251,110.

## Work Program

MIG's proposed work program consists of the following tasks, all tied together via a robust community participation program:

- **Task 1 – Project Management:** This includes regularly scheduled meetings and phone calls throughout the program to keep the project on schedule and within budget.
- **Task 2 – General Plan Update:** Preparation of a comprehensive Existing Conditions/Community Profile report to establish the planning groundwork and identify issues to be addresses in the updated General Plan. The data will be used to inform discussions with the General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) and broad community regarding alternative scenarios and ultimately, the draft General plan for public review. In addition to the State mandated elements, MIG will also prepare an Economic Development Element, Health/Wellness and Environmental Justice Element, and a Climate Change Element.
- **Task 3 – Public Participation Program:** Community engagement for the work program will include focus groups and stakeholder meetings, meetings with the GPAC, a grassroots effort called Envisioning Commerce, community workshops, a multimedia campaign, newsletters, a dedicated project website, meetings with a City Council Sub-Committee, and Planning Commission and City Council study sessions.
- **Task 4 – Zoning Ordinance Update:** The work to comprehensively modernize the Zoning Ordinance and achieve General Plan consistency will begin once land use categories have been confirmed. The goal is to structure zoning regulations to achieve land use goals and keep Commerce business friendly via streamlined entitlement processes. The proposal includes an interactive eCode.
- **Task 5 – CEQA Compliance:** The MIG team will prepare a Program EIR and support City staff in the preparation of CEQA required notices and hearing documents.
- **Task 6 – Support Services:** MIG will support City staff throughout the work program to produce materials for public review and staff reports, etc. for public hearings.

**\*\*A fully detailed scope of work is provided in MIG's proposal, attached to this report\*\***

## Washington and Atlantic Boulevards

Both Washington and Atlantic Boulevards present opportunities for new development. The City Council has expressed keen interest in creating a new vision and development standards for these streets and the areas adjacent to them. Council's commitment has been reinforced with actions, including adoption of the Green Zones Action Plan, which calls for comprehensive planning efforts along these corridors, as well as participation in

workshops regarding implementation thereof. Members of the MIG team previously worked with the City to help develop the Action Plan, and are therefore well aware of the City's desire to bring about change to these areas. Initially, their scope of work did not include the creation of a specific plan/s for Washington and Atlantic. However, prior to their second interview staff asked them to be prepared to provide a recommendation for addressing the needs of both Washington and Atlantic (the same question was asked to the other consultants). In response, MIG proposed the creation of a Specific Plan/s for the streets at no additional cost to the City.

### Zoning Ordinance and CEQA

The most useful General Plans set forth a vision for how a community wants to evolve over time and also provide an orderly and predictable process through which this vision is developed and implemented. A General Plan should serve as an inspiration and communicate a jurisdiction's perception of where it has been, which of its qualities it wishes to maintain, and how it plans to evolve. The Plan should also address key questions and issues such as how much the community will grow where growth will occur, and what local resources will be preserved and enhanced. The Commerce General Plan was last updated in 2008 and it sets forth the City's goals through the year 2020.

All zoning and land use regulations must be consistent with a City's General Plan and all land use decisions made by either the Planning Commission or City Council, must be consistent with the Plan. General Plans are by definition general in nature. They do not include every law or regulation. Instead, they set forth the overall policy framework that is then implemented through zoning, other ordinances, master plans, and other programs. The City must therefore also update its zoning ordinance and map to maintain consistency with the General Plan. Since the General Plan sets forth the framework for the future, tools like the City's Zoning Ordinance provide the details and direction for how the future will take shape.

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), adoption of a General Plan qualifies as a project whose effects on the environment must be analyzed and addressed. This analysis typically takes the form of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Beyond meeting the State requirements, the environmental review process provides critical information to planners, decision makers, and consultants when crafting a General Plan update. By considering potential impacts prior to and throughout the planning process, involved parties can craft a Plan that reduces impacts to the environment and shields residents from environmental hazards. The goal of the CEQA analysis for this project is to create goals, objectives, policies, and actions that mitigate the impacts of the updated General Plan and Zoning Ordinance as much as possible.

### Conclusion

The City's existing General Plan sets forth a vision for the City through 2020. An update to the Plan will take approximately two years to complete. It would provide a basis for local government decision making, including decisions on development approvals, and it would provide citizens with opportunities to participate in the planning and decision making processes of their community. An update is needed to insure future land use decisions are legally defensible, but most importantly, the update will create a new direction for the City's future. The cost associated with the update is substantial, as is the amount of time that will

be required of staff, decision makers, and the community. The update process will provide the City with a document that serves as its “constitution” for decision making regarding the built environment and those things that happen in and around it. Every segment of the community will have the ability to participate in creating the framework for a sustainable future for the City of Commerce.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

1. Approve staff recommendation
2. Reject staff recommendation
3. Provide further direction to staff

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

The proposed cost for work on the subject project is \$1,251,110. Staff is also recommending the City Council authorize additional funds in the amount of \$125,111 for contingencies (10% of the total cost). The total overall cost would therefore be \$1,376,221.

**RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC GOALS:**

The issue before the Council is consistent with Economic Growth Guiding Principle 3 of the City’s 2016 Strategic Plan. This Principle calls for supporting a long range planning vision through the City’s General Plan, Zoning Ordinance and related land use planning documents that incorporate community and stakeholder input and provide a compass for strategic economic growth, infrastructure investments and city fiscal planning. A related action item was also developed that calls for an update to the General Plan and related source documents.

Recommended by: Maryam E. Babaki, P.E., Director of Public Works & Development Services

Prepared by: Matt Marquez, Deputy Director of Development Services

Reviewed by: Vilko Domic, Finance Director

Approved as to form: Noel Tapia, City Attorney

Respectfully submitted: Edgar P. Cisneros, City Administrator

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Resolution
2. Agreement
3. MIG Proposal
4. MIG Fee Schedule
5. Request for Proposals