

Legislation Text

File #: 23-1523, **Version:** 2

PRESENTER:

Jeff Jewell, Economic and Community Development Director

SUBJECT:

Approval of a Professional Services Agreement with the Broussard Group, Inc. dba TBG Partners for the creation of a comprehensive and targeted West End Area Master Plan and authorizing the City Manager to execute the Agreement.

DEPARTMENT: Economic and Community Development

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: 1

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The City's Comprehensive Plan - Envision New Braunfels - established a vision and framework to guide the future of New Braunfels. In that effort, the City identified eight strategies to achieve the objectives outlined in the plan. The first strategy, Support Vibrant Centers, contained several actions and projects for the city to undertake. Specifically, this strategy says to create small area plans for neighborhoods and transitional areas to maintain quality of life and to achieve neighborhood scale commercial and recreation within walking distance of homes. The City of New Braunfels has identified the San Antonio/Spur Streets corridor as an important area for revitalization and is beginning the creation of a small area plan to guide the area's inevitable redevelopment.

Small area plans are focused planning efforts that provide a more granular level of study and specific actions, policies, and investments for a smaller, defined geographic area. They involve input from residents and stakeholders to guide the future of the area under study. This major corridor was historically the main gateway into the City from the south and still connects Interstate 35 to Downtown. This corridor and adjacent neighborhoods are located just outside of downtown and include aging commercial and residential properties with a significant portion of the city's few affordable residential properties. This area is also culturally and historically rich.

An area plan for the corridor and adjacent neighborhoods would help guide and spur additional redevelopment by focusing and leveraging public investments in a way that contribute to a unique sense of place and incentivize desired private investment, while finding ways to accentuate the area's distinct culture and keep residents from being displaced with the changes. The planning process is divided into three broad stages: Discovery, Engagement and Concepts, and Framework Development. The first phase, Discovery, is primarily guided by fieldwork, observation, and inventory. The purpose of this phase is to research, analyze and understand the site context and begin to identify opportunities and constraints. Critical tasks include an inventory of parks, street sections, existing buildings, any civic/cultural assets, land uses, and existing site and traffic characteristics including utilities, topography and floodplain.

The second step involves the community listening sessions. The consultant team, along with city staff, will identify and engage the leaders, participants and stakeholders of the area's neighborhoods, cultural, historic and business institutions. These are to begin crafting an identity for the area based on an understanding of the history, context and what makes the area unique. The design team will also develop enhancements in the area

such as future infill development and public realm improvements (sidewalks, landscape, utilities, etc.). These ideas will be presented to the broader community to gain insight and feedback for further refinement. The consultant will also prepare and launch a digital preference survey to provide the broader New Braunfels community the opportunity to engage with the project and to have influence on the broader vision for the project.

The third and final step is the development of the Conceptual Framework, which provides a series of diagrams, concepts, improvements, and design strategies for the city to study further for feasibility and design. The plan will also identify potential uses and include a typology of potential development patterns and forms to help convey the scale and intent of the desired redevelopment. Street design concepts for San Antonio and Spur Street will also be included.

Taken together, these three steps form a solid foundation for further planning, engineering and design work for the corridor and additional planning activities.

The City solicited a RFQ on April 24, 2023 and received ten Statement of Qualifications applications by the cutoff time on May 18, 2023. TBG Partners was selected as the consultant for this project. A copy of the approved scope of work is attached to this item.

ISSUE:

The creation of a small area plan to provide a baseline vision and framework for the area shown in Exhibit A.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The plan is anticipated to take up to nine months to complete from the date of execution. This agreement will be funded through the budgets from the Economic and Community Development (\$85,000) and Transportation and Capital Improvement Departments (\$30,000). While staff realistically anticipates that some of this plan will be completed in FY 2025 and thus subject to that budget cycle's funding, if expenses are incurred in FY 2024 that exceed the budgeted items from these departments, the balance of funds will be derived from the non-departmental allocation. Staff anticipates approximately \$35,000 (23%) of the contracted amount will be allocated in the FY 2025 budget process.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of a Professional Services Agreement with the Broussard Group, Inc. dba TBG Partners for the creation of a comprehensive and targeted West End Area Master Plan.