



# CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT



February 4, 2025

## ITEM TITLE

Agreement: Approve an Agreement with HR&A Advisors, Inc. to Develop an Economic Development Strategic Plan

**Report Number:** 25-0031

**Location:** Citywide

**Department:** Economic Development

**G.C. § 84308 Regulations Apply:** Yes

**Environmental Notice:** The activity is not a “Project” as defined under Section 15378 of the California Environmental Quality Act State Guidelines. Therefore, pursuant to State Guidelines Section 15060(c)(3) no environmental review is required.

## Recommended Action

Adopt a resolution approving an agreement with HR&A Advisors, Inc. to provide Economic Development Strategic Planning services.

## SUMMARY

In August 2024, the City released a competitive solicitation through the Request for Proposals (RFP) process to identify partners to assist the City in developing an Economic Development Strategic Plan, as well as to provide on-call economic development services to support staff in conducting economic development work. City staff has identified HR&A Advisors, Inc. as the consulting firm most qualified to support the City in developing an Economic Development Strategic Plan. City staff recommends entering into a two-party agreement to provide these services at a maximum contract price of \$272,000.

## ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The Director of Development Services has reviewed the proposed activity for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and has determined that the activity is not a “Project” as defined under Section 15378 of the State CEQA Guidelines because it will not result in a physical change in the environment. Therefore, pursuant to Section 15060(c)(3) of the State CEQA Guidelines, the activity is not subject to CEQA.

## **BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**

N/A

## **DISCUSSION**

Now more than ever, it is crucial for the City to develop a comprehensive Economic Development Strategic Plan that will guide its economic development programs, services, and initiatives over the next five years and beyond. It is particularly appropriate at this time given the significant progress currently being made on catalytic economic development projects within the City, such as: the upcoming opening of the Gaylord Pacific Hotel and Convention Center; continued development of the Chula Vista Bayfront; continued planning for the University-Innovation District; and the City's potential partnerships with the Chula Vista Entertainment Complex and San Diego State University.

Further, recent turnover in staffing within the City's Economic Development team provides an opportunity for the City to consider resources needed to address the economic development goals of the community and City Council. Re-evaluating Economic Development approaches and staffing levels will position the City to provide the appropriate services and programs that support long-term prosperity for Chula Vista's economy.

While the City is currently underway with completing a Citywide Strategic Plan, it is important that the City's Economic Development Strategic Plan be developed outside of that process given the unique economic development opportunities the City faces and the intensive focus that the City's Economic Development work requires.

In August 2024, the City released a competitive solicitation through the Request for Proposals (RFP) process in order to identify partners to assist the City in developing an Economic Development Strategic Plan, as well as to provide on-call economic development services to support staff in conducting ongoing economic development work. As part of the solicitation, the City received nine (9) responses, eight (8) of which were to assist the City in creating an Economic Development Strategic Plan and provide on-call services, and one (1) which was to solely support the City with Economic Development on-call services. The City's selection committee reviewed proposals received and conducted interviews with short-listed candidates. City staff identified HR&A Advisors, Inc. as the firm most qualified to support the City in developing an Economic Development Strategic Plan. Staff recommends entering into a two-party agreement with HR&A Advisors, Inc. to provide these services at a maximum contract price of \$272,000. Staff intends to return to City Council at a later date to request approval of on-call economic development service contracts.

## **DECISION-MAKER CONFLICT**

Staff has reviewed the property holdings of the City Council members and has found no property holdings within 1,000 feet of the boundaries of the property which is the subject of this action. Consequently, this item does not present a disqualifying real property-related financial conflict of interest under California Code of Regulations Title 2, section 18702.2(a)(7) or (8), for purposes of the Political Reform Act (Cal. Gov't Code §87100, et seq.).

Staff is not independently aware, and has not been informed by any City Council member, of any other fact that may constitute a basis for a decision-maker conflict of interest in this matter.

## **CURRENT-YEAR FISCAL IMPACT**

The funding for the Economic Development Strategic Plan, is included in the fiscal year 2024-25 budget.

## **ONGOING FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no ongoing fiscal impact anticipated with the approval of an agreement with HR&A Advisors, Inc. o develop an Economic Development Strategic Plan.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Two-Party Consultant Services Agreement, HR&A Advisors, Inc.

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