



STAFF REPORT

AGENDA NO: 8c

MEETING DATE: January 6, 2020

To: Honorable Mayor and City Council

Date: January 6, 2020

From: Kevin Gardiner, Community Development Director – (650) 558-7253

Subject: Adoption of a Resolution Authorizing the City Manager to Execute a Professional Services Agreement with Urban Field Studio for Conceptual Design Options for a Public Plaza on City Parking Lot E and Coordination with the Development at 220 Park Road (Former Post Office Site)

RECOMMENDATION

The City Council is asked to adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute a Professional Services Agreement with Urban Field Studio for conceptual design options for a public plaza on City Parking Lot E and coordination with the development at 220 Park Road (former Post Office Site) in Downtown Burlingame.

BACKGROUND

The City of Burlingame entered into an Exclusive Negotiating Agreement (ENA) with Burlingame Park Square LLC in 2015 for a development proposal that would encompass both the 220 Park Road property (aka Post Office site) and Parking Lot E. The previous development project included a public plaza within the portion of Lot E fronting on Park Road. The Community Development Department circulated a Request for Proposals (RFP) in February 2019 to five urban design and landscape design firms to peer review the proposed design concept for the public plaza that was going to be part of the development project that included Parking Lot E and the former Post Office site. The City received two proposals and, following interviews, selected Urban Field Studio for the study.

The ENA expired in September, and the previous development proposal has become inactive. Since then, the property owner of the former Post Office has engaged developer Sares Regis on a new development proposal for adaptive reuse of the Post Office site. The revised development project will no longer include City Parking Lot E; however, it is the City's intent to create a public plaza on Lot E that would interface with the revised development of the Post Office property and serve as a focal point for Burlingame's downtown.

DISCUSSION

Given that Parking Lot E is no longer directly part of the Post Office development project, staff requested a revised proposal from Urban Field Studio (attached) that focuses on the development of conceptual design options for a public plaza on Parking Lot E. This work will include public

participation and the development of design concepts for the public plaza that will become a community amenity. In addition to a public plaza, concepts for the northern portion of Parking Lot J along Park Road and a portion of Lot E will be considered for potential development as part of this study. The study will consider the relationship of the public plaza to the adjacent buildings facing (and backing onto) Lot E, as well as coordination with the proposed development of the Post Office site.

The project is in the core of Burlingame's downtown and presents a rare opportunity to create a focal point for Downtown Burlingame. The plaza is intended to be "Burlingame's Living Room," providing a public gathering space in an inviting environment. The plaza could include areas for both active and passive enjoyment, with the goal to ensure that the space is properly suited for downtown events and gatherings. The development of a downtown square/plaza was envisioned as part of the Burlingame Downtown Specific Plan that was adopted in 2010.

The former Post Office borders the new plaza on one side. The Post Office building has been determined to be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under Criteria A (events) and C (design/construction). A preservation covenant ensures that historic or character-defining elements of the property will be retained, including the lobby structure of the building (both interior and exterior), the primary building facade facing Park Road, and the exterior artwork including the bronze relief over the entrance doors. Any adaptive re-use of the building must retain and incorporate these elements, and they will represent a significant influence on the plaza design and layout. Due to the site's prominent location in the downtown, it is critical that the project provide an aesthetic that is both vibrant and interesting, but also integrates with the existing character of the historic elements of the Post Office building. In addition, there is interest in having the design of the plaza complement and possibly reference the recent streetscape improvements on Burlingame Avenue, but not necessarily be identical.

The revised scope of work from Urban Field Studio reflects these goals and includes a team of professionals with expertise in urban design as well as landscape design, engineering, and economics. The proposal includes a comprehensive public participation and outreach component, which will help assist the community in articulating the types of uses and programming envisioned for the plaza as well as design concepts. This team will work collaboratively with Sares Regis to ensure that the development at the Post Office site complements and integrates with the development of Parking Lot E and the plaza. The attached Urban Field Studio proposal details these steps with a process that works with the community to develop conceptual design alternatives, and ultimately a preferred plan.

FISCAL IMPACT

The professional services agreement for the above detailed work will be directly with the City of Burlingame, as the property owner of Parking Lot E. Attached is a draft Agreement for Professional Services with Urban Field Studio to provide public outreach, conceptual design options for a public plaza on City Parking Lot E, and coordination with the proposed development at 220 Park Road (Post Office Site) in an amount not to exceed \$298,800. As spending on this project will cross fiscal years, staff recommends that mid-year funding for the agreement be established in the capital projects fund.

In preliminary discussions with staff and members of the Post Office subcommittee, representatives of Sares Regis have indicated they would be agreeable to funding a pro-rated share of the plaza project should a development proposal for the Post Office site be approved in the future.

Exhibits:

- Resolution
- Draft Agreement for Professional Services with Urban Field Studio
- Scope of Work – Urban Field Studio Proposal for Burlingame Public Plaza & Context Design