

CITY OF PALM DESERT STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: January 11, 2024

PREPARED BY: Chris Gerry, Project Manager

REQUEST: AWARD CONTRACT TO ALTA PLANNING + DESIGN INC. OF LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, TO DEVELOP PALM DESERT VISION ZERO STRATEGY IN THE AMOUNT OF \$948,920, AND APPROPRIATE \$66,980 IN UNOBLIGATED GENERAL FUND REVENUE (PROJECT NO. GSS00001/CST00018)

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Award contract to Alta Planning + Design, Inc., of Los Angeles, California, to develop Palm Desert Vision Zero Strategy in the amount of \$948,920.
2. Authorize the Finance Director to appropriate funds in the amount \$66,980 from unobligated Measure A Fund Balance to Account No. 21343000-4000910, Safe Routes.
3. Authorize the City Attorney to make any necessary non-monetary changes to the agreement.
4. Authorize City Manager or designee to execute agreement and any documents necessary to effectuate actions taken herewith.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:

Federal Grant Program:

In 2022, the U.S. Department of Transportation began a new grant program known as Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A). This federal discretionary program has been appropriated with \$5 billion over five years (2022 to 2026). The SS4A Program funds initiatives to prevent roadway deaths and serious injuries.

The SS4A Program divides into two types of grants: Planning and Implementation grants. Planning grants provide funds to develop or supplement a safety action plan. Implementation grants provide funds to implement projects and strategies identified in Planning grants to address roadway safety problems. Applicants are only eligible to apply for Implementation grants following the award and implementation of Planning grants.

Grant Award and Activities:

In September 2022, the City of Palm Desert (City) submitted an SS4A Planning grant application for the Palm Desert Vision Zero Strategy (Strategy) to undertake planning and public engagement efforts to reduce local roadway fatalities and injuries. The City's grant application requested \$970,000, which included a \$250,000 non-federal share (local match). In July 2023, the City was awarded an SS4A Planning grant in the amount of \$970,000 to develop the Strategy. The Strategy includes the following elements:

- Safe Routes to Schools Plan: The plan aims to improve pedestrian and bicycling options around public schools. Aligned with the City's Local Road Safety Plan, the initiative

addresses traffic safety concerns during student drop-off and pick-up times. Through tasks such as data analysis, collision assessments, community engagement, and infrastructure recommendations, the plan aims to create safer and more accessible routes for students, families, and residents. This approach includes working with an advisory committee, outreach events, and forming actionable recommendations.

- Safe Routes for Seniors Plan: The plan aims to enhance the walking and bicycling options for the City's senior population by evaluating transportation infrastructure and mobility programs to improve safety and convenience for seniors. The plan conducts analyses and engages with an advisory committee to develop outreach, workshops, surveys, and walk audits to identify obstacles and offer practical suggestions.
- Public Engagement and Activation: The initiative aims to educate the community on using the City's active transportation network safely and comfortably. This locally branded campaign, supported by significant funding, involves professional marketing services. It seeks to transform the local culture of driving, walking, and biking, with a specific focus on biking practices in Palm Desert. Ultimately, the goal is to implement a marketing strategy that fosters safe biking practices and engages the community.
- Investment Strategy: The Investment Strategy aims to consolidate and prioritize infrastructure projects to pursue future capital improvements, particularly in securing a SS4A Implementation grant. This involves reviewing and aligning various planning documents, identifying outstanding project recommendations, and evaluating them based on safety enhancement, feasibility, and grant criteria.
- Dashboard and Monitoring Tool: The tool will publicly track and maintain progress in reducing traffic injuries and fatalities and provide accountability, quantify program impacts, and facilitate necessary adjustments in strategy. The tool will integrate injury, crash, demographic, and transportation data from multiple sources.
- Project Administration: This amount goes toward City staff grant administration.

Procurement and Analysis:

In late September 2023, the City released a Request for Proposal (RFP) to develop the Strategy. The City received three proposals from consulting firms by early November 2023. A review committee consisting of staff from the departments of Public Works and Economic Development (Public Affairs) evaluated the proposals. The consulting firms and proposed costs can be found below; please note the proposals were evaluated based on providing the most robust and creative scope of services within the defined federal grant budget (and not the lowest cost).

Consulting Firm	Location	Proposal Amount
Minagar & Associates, Inc.	Laguna Hills, CA	\$606,960
Alta Planning + Design, Inc.	Los Angeles, CA	\$948,920
Kimely-Horn & Associates, Inc.	Orange, CA	\$949,010

Recommendation:

City staff recommend entering into a professional services agreement with Alta Planning + Design, Inc. (Consultant) in the amount of \$948,920. The proposal review committee found the Consultant’s proposal to have the most comprehensive and creative approach to implementing the scope of services, and within the federal grant budget. The Consultant anticipates completing the scope of services by July 31, 2025.

The Consultant offered outstanding references and notably emphasized their capacity to advance planning initiatives in complex environments with various internal and external stakeholders. They were also recognized for their adeptness in executing projects within the designated budget, timeline, and scope. In addition, the Consultant outlined its track record of delivering similar projects locally, regionally, and nationally. Agencies that they have performed similar types of projects over the last five years include:

Agency	Project
CVAG	CV Link Master Plan, Design, Engineering & Construction Support
City of Coachella	Connecting Coachella ATP Application & PA&ED
County of San Mateo	Evaluation, High-Injury Network & SRTS Strategy
City of Santa Monica	Safe Routes for Seniors - Active Aging Pilot Program
City of Bakersfield	Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Plan
County of San Bernardino	Safe Routes to School Program
City of Oceanside	Safe Routes to School Program
City of El Paseo, TX	Vision Zero Action Plan

Note a substantial amount of funds are allocated toward education and outreach (campaign) activities due to the ability to make an immediate and memorable impact. While the City has already invested heavily in making active transportation improvements, this campaign will focus on communicating key messages with roadway users to promote safety. The consulting firms were also encouraged to subcontract with professional marketing services during the RFP process to develop strategies and materials. As suggested, the Consultant partnered with the full-service creative agency, Idea Peddler, to assist with the public engagement and activation activities. The Consultant’s proposal includes the required elements in the RFP and the budget can be found accordingly, excluding \$20,000 for City project administration.

Strategy	Timeline	Proposal Amount
Safe Routes to School	January 2024 – February 2025	\$257,264
Safe Routes for Seniors	January 2024 – February 2025	\$155,508
Public Engagement & Activation	April 2024 – July 2025	\$403,115
Investment Strategy	September 2024 – April 2025	\$75,780
Dashboard & Monitoring Tool	June 2024 – March 2025	\$57,253
		Total: \$948,920

Implementation Grant (2025):

As previously mentioned, SS4A Implementation grants provide funds to construct projects and strategies identified only from these Planning grants to address roadway safety problems. Regarding the City’s Planning grant, the proposed Investment Strategy would consolidate newly formed and outstanding recommendations across planning documents to prioritize and pursue

capital improvement projects in the future. Specifically, the City is strongly interested in developing a detailed scope of priorities to pursue in an SS4A Implementation grant in 2025.

Legal Review:

This report has been reviewed by the City Attorney's Office.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There is no financial impact to the City's General Fund with this action. Funds totaling \$1,131,940 were included in the Safe Routes to Schools Plan in the approved Capital Improvements Project (CIP) List for Fiscal Year 2023-24 under Measure A Account Number 2134300-5000910. Funds totaling \$881,940 remain in this account (\$250,000 budgeted to the Wayfinding Master Plan).

The contract totals \$948,920, which includes \$698,920 to be reimbursed by the U.S. Department of Transportation SS4A Grant and \$250,000 as the City's non-federal share (local match). Due to amounts of funds available prior to reimbursement, an appropriation of \$66,980 is necessary.

FY 2023 – 24 CIP List: Measure A (Account # 2134300-5000910)			
Description	Budget	Cost	Variance
Wayfinding Master Plan	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$0.00
Safe Routes to Schools Plan *	\$881,940	\$948,920	(\$66,980)
Total	\$1,131,940	\$1,198,920	(\$66,980)

** Current budget request and \$698,920 reimbursable by the U.S. Department of Transportation SS4A Grant*

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Professional Services Agreement
2. Proposal