

# Mayor and Council Communication

DATE: 06/14/22

M&C FILE NUMBER: M&C 22-0453

LOG NAME: 19NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION PLAN

## **SUBJECT**

(ALL) Authorize a Substantial Amendment to the City of Fort Worth's 2021-2022 Action Plan to Reallocate Unprogrammed Community Development Block Grant Funds in the amount of \$247,880.00 for the Development of a Neighborhood Conservation Plan and Authorize Execution of Related Contract Documents with Interface Studio, LLC

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## **RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Authorize a substantial amendment to the City of Fort Worth's 2021-2022 Action Plan to reallocate unprogrammed Community Development Block Grant Funds in the amount of \$247,880.00 for a city-wide Neighborhood Conservation Plan;
2. Authorize execution of related contract documents with Interface Studio, LLC; and
3. Authorize the City Manager, or his designee, to amend contracts as necessary for completion of the project, provided any amendments are within the scope of the project and comply with City policies and all applicable laws and regulations governing the use of federal grant funds.

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## **DISCUSSION:**

The purpose of this Mayor and Council Communication (M&C) is to authorize execution of a contract with Interface Studio, LLC for the development of a city-wide Neighborhood Conservation Plan and approve the use of Community Development Block Grant funds to fund the project through a substantial amendment to the Action Plan.

### **Background**

The Neighborhood Quality and Revitalization Committee, a subcommittee of the Fort Worth City Council, requested that staff develop a methodology to evaluate the efforts of the Neighborhood Improvement Strategy (NIS) and explore best practices from across the United States. A strategic focus on supporting specific neighborhoods in the City started in 2016 at a City Council retreat and progressed to the development of the NIS, which is now in its sixth year and has successfully invested \$14.7M in the most distressed Fort Worth neighborhoods.

In addition to studying the NIS and best practices, the Neighborhood Quality and Revitalization Committee asked staff to investigate new strategies and practices through a planning effort:

- Should the City have a strategy in place for neighborhoods that are not severely distressed, but could fall into distress without intervention (called "At Risk")?
- Should the City do more neighborhood improvement strategies at one time?
- How much capital investment is needed to move a distressed neighborhood to stable? Move an at-risk neighborhood to stable? What should the investments be?
- What do we need to do to have more thriving neighborhoods in the City?
- How do we help distressed or at-risk neighborhoods improve without economic displacement?

The Neighborhood Quality and Revitalization Committee additionally asked for a plan to address distressed and at-risk neighborhoods and the City's implementation of our neighborhood work:

- Where are Fort Worth Neighborhoods in the hierarchy of neighborhood vitality and how is it measured? How can the City measure and project change over time?
- How does neighborhood capacity and leadership contribute to the vitality of neighborhood in Fort Worth?
- How can the City build on existing programs to increase neighborhood and community capacity?
- What partnerships can be leveraged to increase or improve capacity-building efforts?
- What new programs, activities or initiatives should be employed to build neighborhood and community capacity?
- If these neighborhood issues are so complex that they involve expertise from several departments, how could the City organize neighborhood conservation efforts to maximize outcomes?

In February, 2022, the Neighborhood Services Department issued a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) requesting qualifications of multidisciplinary consultant teams to work closely with a City Interdepartmental Management Team (e.g., Police, Neighborhood Services, Economic Development, Planning & Data Analytics, CODE, and Library) and a select group of community stakeholders appointed by Council Members to prepare a Neighborhood Conservation Plan that not only answers the questions posed, but also provides a framework for implementing City-wide neighborhood improvement.

In response to the RFQ, the City received four proposals from qualified firms. The criteria established in the RFQ included:

**Neighborhood Conservation Plan Criteria**

<b>Criteria No.</b>	<b>Factor</b>	<b>Weight</b>
1	Project Team experience in successfully delivering Neighborhood Conservations Plans (or similar efforts) that were implemented by the client.	20
2	Project Team's understanding of the proposed project as explained in their proposal and capacity to perform the submitted plan.	20
3	Project Team members' pertinent experience in: City planning (10) Neighborhood development (10) Community economic development (10)	30
4	Project Team ability to engage with the public and secure meaningful public input during the development of the plan.	15
5	Project Team members' experience in planning in neighborhoods.	10
6	Diversity of the multi-disciplinary team is representative of the City of Fort Worth's residential demographics.	5

A committee of seven City department heads met to review and score proposals. The scores of each of the RFQ respondents include:

<b>RFQ Respondent</b>	<b>Score</b>
Moya Design	308
J Quad Planning	328
Ricker Cunningham	327
Interface Studio	364

One firm, Interface Studio, LLC, scored significantly higher than the other proposals and was recognized by the panel as the most qualified proposer. City staff determined that in-person interviews were not necessary and recommended awarding a contract to Interface Studio, LLC.

An environmental review will be completed prior to work being completed. This planning effort will commence in July 2022 and will be completed by end of March 2023.

This plan and programs are available in ALL COUNCIL DISTRICTS.

**FISCAL INFORMATION / CERTIFICATION:**

The Director of Finance certifies that funds are available in the current operating/capital budget, as previously appropriated, in the General Fund and the Grants Operating Federal Fund for the CDBG (PY21/FY22) project to support the approval of the above recommendations and award of the contract. Prior to any expenditure being incurred, the Neighborhood Services Department has the responsibility to validate the availability of funds.

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