



# Agenda Report

October 19, 2020

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council

**FROM:** Planning & Community Development Department  
Fire Department

**SUBJECT: AUTHORIZATION TO ENTER INTO CONTRACTS WITH SCOTT FAZEKAS AND ASSOCIATES AND TRUE NORTH COMPLIANCE SERVICES FOR BUILDING AND FIRE PLAN REVIEW SERVICES FOR THE PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT, BUILDING AND SAFETY DIVISION**

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Find that the action proposed herein is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) (General Rule); and
2. Authorize the City Manager to enter into a contract for Plan Review Services following a competitive selection process, pursuant to Pasadena Municipal Code Section 4.08.047 for an amount not to exceed \$300,000 or a three-year period, whichever occurs first, with Scott Fazekas and Associates; and
3. Authorize the City Manager to enter into a contract for Plan Review Services following a competitive selection process, pursuant to Pasadena Municipal Code Section 4.08.047 for an amount not to exceed \$300,000 or a three-year period, whichever occurs first, with True North Compliance Services, Inc.; and
4. Authorize the City Manager to extend each contract for up to two additional one-year periods not to exceed \$300,000 per year.

## **BACKGROUND:**

The City's Planning & Community Development and Fire Departments review construction plans for all new construction within the City. The demand for these services fluctuates over time in response to a variety of factors. To meet peak demand for plan check services, the City has traditionally contracted with multiple outside

consultants, on an as-needed basis, to augment internal staff resources which allows for additional flexibility in the distribution of plan check workloads and to meet plan check turn-around times; rather than hiring permanent full-time staff which may not be necessary over a longer period of time.

The plan review services consultants have been utilized for reviewing specialty and large projects in a timely manner including, the Education First Academy campus which consists of several existing buildings and new dormitories, the Parsons project which consists of residential midrise, mixed-use and office buildings, and California Institute of Technology which consists of a variety of projects such as laboratories, research and classrooms. The selected consultants will concurrently be utilized should an emergency or disaster occur which will increase the demand of services.

Project thresholds, described below, have been established to determine plan review turnaround times. The expected turnaround times for plan reviews based on the determined thresholds are: fifteen (15) working days for medium projects; twenty-five (25) working days for large projects; and, five (5) working days to perform any and all subsequent reviews and final reviews.

Projects categorized as medium projects include:

- Tenant Improvements under 10,000 square feet; including restaurants, food handling facilities, medical/dental facilities under 10,000 square feet;
- Change of use over 3,000 square feet and under 10,000 square feet;
- Single-Family Residential additions up to 1,000 square feet, not in Hillside Overlay Districts;
- All residential remodels over 500 square feet (interior only, no additions);
- Residential remodels with up to 1,000 square-foot addition, not in Hillside Overlay Districts;
- Residential remodels with up to 500 square-foot addition, in Hillside Overlay Districts;
- New accessory structures over 120 square feet, in Hillside Overlay Districts;
- Swimming pools and/or spas in Hillside Overlay Districts;
- Commercial and Multi-Family Residential (more than two units) additions under 500 square feet;
- Signs requiring zoning field inspection and/or Design Review;
- Retaining walls;
- Wireless communication facility.

Projects categorized as large projects include:

- Tenant improvements over 10,000 square feet;
- Commercial and Multi-Family Residential (more than two units) additions over 500 square feet;
- All new construction of Single-Family Residential, Multi-Family Residential (including duplexes), Commercial, Mixed-Use, Industrial, or Institutional projects;
- All Single-Family Residential additions over 1,000 square feet;

- Residential remodels with over 1,000 square-foot addition, not in Hillside Overlay Districts;
- Seismic retrofit;
- All grading;
- Change of use over 10,000 square feet.

As previously noted, the City has contracted with multiple outside consultants for plan review services. Since 2004, the City of Pasadena has awarded four professional services contracts. There are two active plan review services contracts which are set to expire this year, with Scott Fazekas and Associates and CSG Consulting for plan review services. Both contracts were primarily designated for building plan review services; however, the scope of work allowed for fire plan review services. These contracts provide auxiliary service to both the Building and Safety Division and the Fire Prevention - Plan Review Unit to supplement staff to complete plan reviews.

Over the past five years, the Building and Safety Division processed 10,956 plan review submittals, which includes Building and Fire Life and Safety plan reviews. In addition, the Fire Department received 2,491 fire sprinkler and fire alarm plan reviews. Of the 13,447 total building and fire plan reviews received, 5,605 were reviewed by outside consultants with the remaining reviewed in-house. Currently, the City's five full-time plans examiner's each maintain an average of 16 active plan checks, at any given time.

A Request for Proposals (RFP) for plan review services was issued on August 20, 2020 with thirteen (13) proposals received by the proposal due date, provided below:

<b>Firm</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Score</b>
Scott Fazekas and Associates (SFA)	Irvine, CA	85.5
True North Compliance Services, Inc.	Long Beach, CA	78.5
Interwest Group	Irvine, CA	69
TRB and Associates, Inc.	Long Beach, CA	65.5
CSG Consulting, Inc.	Orange, CA	63.5
J Lee Engineering, Inc.	Alhambra, CA	62.5
Bureau Veritas	Pasadena, CA	62
The Code Group (VCA)	Orange, CA	61
4-Leaf	Newport Beach, CA	61
Transtech Engineers, Inc.	Chino, CA	56.5
Willdan Engineering	Industry, CA	56
JAS Consulting, Inc.	Upland, CA	51.5
NV5, Inc.	Irvine, CA	46.5

To be considered for selection, proposals were to demonstrate substantial knowledge and experience in completing plan reviews for public and private development projects, verifying compliance with California Building Standards Code, California Fire Code and Life and Safety provisions, Pasadena Municipal Code, and other related codes and ordinances applicable to development projects in the City of Pasadena. Proposals were also to demonstrate cost-effectiveness, have expertise in building construction and

building codes, ability to provide high quality plan review services, and meet the City's expected plan review turnaround times.

A panel of staff evaluated proposals based on the criteria set forth in the RFP, and in accordance with the City's competitive selection process for professional services. Based on staff's analysis of the proposals received, Scott Fazekas and Associates (SFA) and True North Compliance Services were determined to be the most qualified to perform the required services for the City.

As such, it is recommended that contracts be awarded to both consultants for building and fire plan review services in the amount not to exceed \$300,000 per consultant, for an initial three year term, with two optional one-year renewals subject to City Manager approval.

**COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATION:**

The proposed contract furthers the City Council's strategic plan goals of ensuring public safety and increasing conservation and sustainability. In addition, the contract award furthers the City's mission to deliver exemplary municipal services.

**ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:**

This project is exempt from CEQA review pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) (General Rule). The contract award is covered by the general rule that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to the provisions of CEQA.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

The proposed contracts with Scott Fazekas and Associates and True North Compliance Services will not have a fiscal impact on the City's General Fund. The total proposed contract expense is \$600,000, which includes the option for two additional one-year extensions. The FY 2021 Operating Budget includes \$715,000 appropriations in the Building Fund for contract plan review services and all expenses are paid from fees generated from plan check services.

Respectfully submitted,



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Prepared by:



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Concurred by,



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Bryan Frieders  
Interim Fire Chief  
Fire Department

Approved by:



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STEVE MERMELL  
City Manager

Attachments: (1)

Attachment A –Evaluation Summary