



COUNCIL REPORT

DATE: June 25, 2024

CATEGORY: Consent

DEPT.: City Manager's Office

TITLE: **Agreement with Cascadia Consulting Group to Develop 2035 Climate Strategy**

RECOMMENDATION

Authorize the City Manager or designee to execute a professional services agreement with Cascadia Consulting Group to develop a 2035 Climate Strategy in a not-to-exceed amount of \$433,234.

BACKGROUND

On April 12, 2020, the City Council passed a resolution for Mountain View to become a carbon-neutral city by 2045. In response to the growing threat of climate change, the Council Sustainability Committee (CSC) expressed an interest to explore accelerating climate goals. Staff presented an assessment in April and June 2022 with the CSC directing staff to prepare a 2035 Decarbonization Roadmap (referred to as the 2035 Climate Strategy or Strategy) for City Council consideration.

The City Council has adopted multiple plans in the past that include climate goals, such as the fourth Sustainability Action Plan (SAP) in 2019 that included specific actions to develop a climate vulnerability and resilience plan and decarbonization strategy. The 2035 Climate Strategy will fulfill these SAP actions.

In 2015, Mountain View's Climate Protection Roadmap was adopted, which included strategies to reduce communitywide greenhouse gas emissions 80% by 2050. Aside from significant progress assessing and preparing for sea level rise, the City has conducted more planning for decarbonization than for resiliency. The 2035 Climate Strategy will build upon the City's decarbonization and resiliency efforts with an emphasis on vulnerability assessment, resiliency planning, and community engagement. The Strategy will include an accelerated 2035 goal and provide strategies that are complementary and responsive to changes and advancements in the private and public sectors.

The contract to develop the 2035 Climate Strategy exceeds \$250,000 and requires City Council approval to enter into an agreement with Cascadia Consulting Group. The recommended not-

to-exceed contract amount is \$433,234, and there is sufficient budget in the Sustainability Project Capital Improvement Program (CIP) (Project 20-99) to cover the services.

ANALYSIS

Selection Process

On March 11, 2024, the City issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) to select consultant services to develop a 2035 Climate Strategy. The RFP was posted on the City's PlanetBids webpage, receiving interest from over 50 organizations and questions from three consulting firms. The City received six proposals in response to the RFP. A selection committee comprised of staff from the Sustainability and Resiliency Division evaluated the proposals, interviewed the top three respondents, and conducted reference checks for the top two respondents. After a thorough analysis based on the merits of the firm's experience, demonstration of competence with similar projects for other organizations in the San Francisco Bay Area, and project understanding, the selection committee selected Cascadia Consulting Group as the most qualified consultant for this project. For these reasons, staff recommends awarding the contract to Cascadia Consulting Group in the amount of \$433,234 to develop a 2035 Climate Strategy for Mountain View.

Cascadia Consulting Group is a consulting firm with staff experienced in strategic planning, analysis, and management of climate change mitigation and adaptation, energy efficiency and renewable energy, recycling and materials management, and resource conservation projects. Cascadia Consulting Group's climate planning and engagement work includes recent and ongoing projects to develop Climate Action Plans for over a dozen local governments and agencies, including San Francisco, Pleasanton, Pico Rivera, Cupertino, Albany, Dublin, Foster City, Livermore, and Sonoma and San Mateo counties. To support development of the Strategy, Cascadia Consulting Group has hired a subconsultant, InterEthnica, that specializes in process facilitation, multicultural engagement, and community outreach planning. InterEthnica has extensive experience engaging frontline and disadvantaged communities.

The scope of work, included as Attachment 1, is structured around the development of an integrated Climate Strategy for 2035 that includes both decarbonization and climate resiliency. The scope contains project management and an equity-focused outreach and engagement process, including community surveys, workshops, webinars, and/or focus groups. It also includes climate and social vulnerability assessments and resiliency planning and integration of this information with decarbonization planning as the foundation of the integrated Climate Strategy.

The recommended fees are within the range typically charged for such services based on similar types of projects in the region. The base costs provided in the six proposals received in response to this solicitation ranged from \$257,455 to \$314,800. The base cost proposed by Cascadia

(\$274,314) was less than the average base cost of all the submitted proposals (\$282,647). The recommended not-to-exceed contract amount is \$433,234 because additional services were added to the scope of work to augment community engagement efforts and include wedge analyses to forecast future greenhouse gas emissions and reductions against adopted or proposed reduction targets.

2035 Climate Strategy Process

The 2035 Climate Strategy will identify a set of integrated measures and actions that can meet the City's decarbonization and resiliency goals. Actions will be prioritized based on criteria such as social equity, emissions reduction or adaptation potential, feasibility, cost, community support, and cobenefits such as public health outcomes, economic development and workforce training, enhanced biodiversity, or other beneficial outcomes. The result will be a high-level, equity-focused plan that provides a menu of options for implementation over the first five years.

The climate vulnerability assessment will identify projected climate hazards, such as extreme heat, wildfire smoke, sea level rise, storms, and riverine flooding, and their potential impacts on Mountain View. This work will include four phases: (1) exposure analysis; (2) sensitivity analysis; (3) adaptive capacity analysis; and (4) vulnerability assessment. Cascadia Consulting Group will complement this summary of climate impacts with a social vulnerability assessment to help the City understand the distributional burden of climate change impacts across its jurisdiction as well as the social determinants of vulnerability, such as income, age, race, linguistic isolation, renter status, or other factors. Additionally, understanding the determinants of vulnerability will also help the City in tailoring climate actions to improve social equity outcomes or mitigate unintended negative impacts of climate action.

With the approval of this contract, Cascadia Consulting Group could begin the project in summer 2024. Staff anticipates that the 2035 Climate Strategy will be presented to the City Council for adoption by the end of calendar year 2025. In addition to public and stakeholder engagement, staff will solicit feedback from the Council Sustainability Committee, City Council, and other appropriate advisory bodies at key points throughout the project.

FISCAL IMPACT

The \$433,234 Climate Strategy contract for 2035 will be funded by the Sustainability Project (Project 20-99). A sum of \$40,500 from the Silicon Valley Clean Energy engagement grant will be deposited into the Sustainability Project to partially cover this contract. There is sufficient budget in Project 20-99 to cover this contract, and no additional appropriation is needed.

In May 2023, Silicon Valley Clean Energy awarded the City of Mountain View a grant in the amount of \$70,000 to engage the community and local organizations in the codevelopment of

building electrification outreach and engagement strategies. This grant includes \$40,500 to be used for incentives for community members and/or organizations that participate in the outreach process. Staff is integrating the remaining community engagement for this project into the scope of the 2035 Climate Strategy.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Do not authorize the professional services agreement and direct staff to reissue the RFP.
2. Provide other direction.

PUBLIC NOTICING—Agenda posting.

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CW-LA/6/CAM
624-06-25-24CR
204174

Attachment: 1. Scope of Work for the Development of a 2035 Climate Strategy