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Agenda Items: ID#19-11527 (4-A)

Date: 11/14/2019

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CITY OF FRESNO
CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

FRESNO CITY COUNCIL



Additional Information

Agenda Related Item(s) – ID#19-11527 (4-A)

Item(s)

Actions pertaining to the South Industrial Priority Area (SIPA):

1. Approve a First Amendment to the Consultant Services Agreement with Ascent Environmental, Inc., regarding land use, planning, and environmental services for the South Industrial Priority Area (SIPA). (Council District 3)
2. ***RESOLUTION – In support of community engagement in the South Industrial Priority Area Specific Plan (Subject to Mayor's veto)

Contents: Letter of Support

Supplemental Information:

Any agenda related public documents received and distributed to a majority of the City Council after the Agenda Packet is printed are included in Supplemental Packets. Supplemental Packets are produced as needed. The Supplemental Packet is available for public inspection in the City Clerk's Office, 2600 Fresno Street, during normal business hours (main location pursuant to the Brown Act, G.C. 54957.5(2)). In addition, Supplemental Packets are available for public review at the City Council meeting in the City Council Chambers, 2600 Fresno Street. Supplemental Packets are also available on-line on the City Clerk's website.

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Fresno City College

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Office of the President

sent via email

November 14, 2019

Mr. Lee Brand, Mayor, City of Fresno
Mr. Paul Paul Caprioglio, Fresno City Council President
Ms. Esmeralda Soria, Fresno City Councilmember, District 1
Mr. Michael Karbassi, Fresno City Councilmember, District 2
Mr. Miguel Arias, Fresno City Councilmember, District 3
Mr. Luis Chavez, Fresno City Councilmember, District 5
Mr. Gary Bredefeld, Fresno City Councilmember, District 6
Mr. Nelson Esparza, Fresno City Councilmember, District 7
Ms. Yvonne Spence, Fresno City Clerk

Dear Mayor Brand, City Councilmembers, and Ms. Spence:

As the President of Fresno City College, I understand the importance of planning, especially planning for change. Fresno City College has been an active participant of the "Developing the Region's Inclusive and Vibrant Economy ("DRIVE") Initiative, which is dedicated to developing a vision and detailed business plans to create long-term, equitable development in Fresno. A core principle of DRIVE is advancing racial equity in all of the initiatives through specific tactics. That core principle of addressing and improving racial equity is a mutual goal. The faculty and staff of Fresno City College have been diligently working to become a campus that is grounded on student equity to allow our community members to achieve their educational goals and reach economic prosperity. We are all committed to working together to close equity gaps for our historically underrepresented and disproportionately impacted populations. While we have been successful in making gains in the educational gaps, we must address the economic disparities as well.

We understand that in terms of economic development, this includes the meaningful engagement of residents to ensure their input into the future of their communities while protecting and improving their environment, existing housing, and the quality of life for residents. We recognize that without centering these principles in our efforts, we cannot succeed in our goal to create an inclusive, vibrant, regional economy for all.

It is with these values in mind that I write to you now to express Fresno City College's support for the initiation of a "South Central Neighborhoods Specific Plan." This plan will bring together community residents, educational partners, institutional leaders, property owners, and other community stakeholders to develop a vision, land use scheme, and policies for the future of the area encompassed by and adjacent to the General Plan South Industrial Priority Area. The South Central Neighborhoods Specific Plan will develop authentic solutions that balance residents' right to live in a quality, healthy environment where they can live, work, play and worship. A quality environment includes basic infrastructure, services, and amenities along with opportunities for investment and job growth.

Mayor Lee Brand
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The South Central Neighborhoods Specific Plan provides a much-needed opportunity to approach economic development in a new way, where all stakeholders are included and outcomes marry quality jobs, a healthy environment, economic expansion, and the protection of housing within existing communities. The South Central Neighborhoods Specific Plan will allow us to address land use patterns which have led to the location of industrial facilities near homes, schools, parks and other sensitive uses in Fresno's low-income neighborhoods of color. These communities represent the most pollution-burdened communities in the State of California.

The South Central Neighborhoods Specific Plan will also address the need for businesses that provide residents with a pathway out of poverty by providing high quality jobs that pay a living wage and offer robust benefits and career advancement opportunities, while at the same time protecting the environment, investing back into our most vulnerable neighborhoods, and expanding Fresno's economic base.

Without the time and space for community dialogue and community-driven planning on the complex environmental, public health, and economic development issues relevant to the area, we will miss the opportunity to authentically advance outcomes that simultaneously benefit neighborhood residents and the wider Fresno community and provide an example for how to make land use decisions going forward. We believe this process can be conducted within a 6- to 8-month timeline, building upon the work of DRIVE and other efforts.

The South Central Neighborhoods Specific Plan is an essential investment in Fresno's future—one that expands opportunities for all residents to thrive—that will also serve as a model for communities across the San Joaquin Valley, state and country which grapple with similar issues of environmental injustice and poverty. We thank you for your consideration of this letter and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Carole Goldsmith".

Carole Goldsmith, Ed.D.
President