



Agenda Item #: _____

Staff Report

City of Manhattan Beach

TO: Honorable Mayor Tell and Members of the City Council

THROUGH: Geoff Dolan, City Manager

FROM: Lindy Coe-Juell, Assistant to the City Manager

DATE: July 17, 2007

SUBJECT: Facilities Strategic Plan Update; Consideration of a Contract with the Lew Edwards Group for a Non-Advocacy Public Education Program and Polling Service; and Appropriate \$156,600 from the Unreserved CIP Fund Balance

RECOMMENDATION:

The Facilities Strategic Plan sub-committee (Mayor Tell & Mayor Pro Tem Aldinger) and staff recommend that the City Council:

- a) Receive and file this Facilities Strategic Plan (FSP) update;
- b) Authorize the City Manager to enter into an agreement with the Lew Edwards Group in the amount of \$231,600 for an FSP Non-Advocacy public education program and polling services;
- c) Appropriate \$156,600 from the CIP fund for this program; and
- d) Discuss and appoint two Council Members to a sub-committee to work with the Lew Edwards Group and City staff.

FISCAL IMPLICATION:

The Fiscal year 2007-2008 budget includes \$75,000 for contract services related to the FSP education program. The Lew Edwards Group proposal cost of \$216,600 includes \$78,000 in contract service fees; \$61,100 for opinion research; \$70,000 for direct mailing; and \$7,500 for not-to-exceed reimbursable expenses. The opinion research and direct mail portion of the proposal is to further engage and inform our constituents in this planning process.

The FSP sub-committee and staff recommend increasing the direct mailing budget by \$15,000 to allow for development of other types of multi-media outreach, making the total project budget \$231,600. An appropriation of \$156,600 from the CIP fund, which has a current unreserved balance of approximately \$1.8 million, is recommended.

BACKGROUND:

During the June 19, 2007 City Council meeting, MDA Johnson Favaro (MDAJF) gave an update presentation regarding the FSP planning process and the current thinking on proposed facility size and placement. To date, this nine-month long community driven planning process has included monthly meetings of a resident steering committee, over 60 stakeholder meetings, four community

forums, review of related documents, on-site facility research and many iterative drawings showing options for new, or reconstructed, facilities.

MDAJF summarized that the FSP steering committee would meet again in July, August and September to formalize its recommendations on the FSP master plan. This master plan will be forwarded to the relevant City Commissions for review and comment and the ultimate discussion and approval of the master plan will be done by the City Council. Staff expects that City Council will receive the master plan for consideration by the end of the year.

In an effort to provide more frequent FSP updates to City Council, staff plans to submit monthly staff reports giving a summary of FSP related activity over the previous four week period. This current report focuses on the efforts to identify a qualified firm to lead a public education program. Next month, we will report on the steering committee's review of proposals for a new library, community center and community theatre.

On July 2, 2007, the FSP sub-committee, the City Manager, the Assistant to the City Manager, and the Parks & Recreation Director met to review a proposal from the Lew Edwards Group and is recommending that City Council authorize a contract with this firm to lead a non-advocacy public education program. The intent of this education program will be to inform our residents of the outcome of the master planning process and to conduct public opinion research regarding bond feasibility for those facilities identified in the master plan.

DISCUSSION:

Consideration of the Lew Edwards Group Proposal

On April 13, 2007, the City released a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for the public education phase of the FSP project. Five qualified firms responded to the RFQ. Of these five firms, the FSP sub-committee selected three to make in-person presentations of their planned approach for the education program. These interviews were held on May 31, 2007. Based on extensive related previous experience and the strength of the strategy presented, the sub-committee asked the Lew Edwards Group to submit a detailed proposal (available for review at City Hall).

The Lew Edwards Group proposal is recommended for several reasons. They have a proven track record of successfully identifying community priorities related to capital improvement projects. A key aspect to their approach is the use of public polls and focus group discussions. Another key aspect in their proposal is a methodical informational program, which includes a number of community-wide direct mailers, update stories in local media and non-advocacy speakers' bureau outreach series. The timeline for this scope of work would begin immediately upon City Council's approval of a contract and would culminate with City Council's action to place a bond measure, if feasible, on the November 2008 ballot.

Catherine Lew, President of the Lew Edwards Group, would be the project manager for the FSP non-advocacy public education program. Ms. Lew has more than 25 years of experience in the area of communications and public relations. She would be directly engaged in managing each step of the project. Ms. Lew is also a California attorney and is particularly attuned to the legal issue of ensuring that all materials developed with City funds are informational and non-advocacy in nature. On this issue it is also noteworthy that our City Attorney will have final approval of all

materials prior to being produced. The Lew Edwards Group's pollster of choice is Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin & Associates (FMMA). FMMA has extensive experience in local government based opinion research and comes highly recommended by several South Bay Cities.

Public Education Program Sub-Committee

When the City Council initiated the FSP in late 2005, a Council sub-committee was appointed. The sub-committee members are Mayor Nick Tell and Mayor Pro Tem Jim Aldinger. Since their initial appointment they reviewed and interviewed consultants to conduct the FSP, they recommended the hiring of MDA Johnson Favaro, they studied and recommended steering committee members, and they have overseen all accomplishments and activities on the FSP to date.

These activities include numerous community and steering committee meetings as well as many sub-committee meetings with staff and MDA Johnson Favaro. Most recently, the sub-committee solicited consultant proposals and interviewed firms to assist with our next steps including the non-advocacy public education and polling services. It is expected that with this next phase of work to begin soon, the City Council may want to appoint an additional sub-committee to work with staff and Catherine Lew in the coming months.

CONCLUSION:

The FSP sub-committee and staff recommend that the City Council authorize the City Manager to enter into an agreement with the Lew Edwards Group to carry out their proposal for an FSP Public Education Program and Polling Services; appropriate \$156,600 from CIP fund for this program; and discuss and provide direction for a sub-committee to work with the Lew Edwards Group and City staff.