



Monterey County

Item No.

Board Report

Board of Supervisors
Chambers
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor
Salinas, CA 93901

Legistar File Number: A 22-114

March 22, 2022

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Current Status: Agenda Ready

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Matter Type: BoS Agreement

Consider approving the 2022 Downtown Government Center Memorandum of Understanding (Downtown MOU) with the City of Salinas regarding the mutual planning of government services and facilities in downtown Salinas.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors:

- a. Approve the 2022 Downtown Government Center Memorandum of Understanding (Downtown MOU) with the City of Salinas regarding the mutual planning of government services and facilities in downtown Salinas; and
- b. Provide direction to staff.

SUMMARY:

The Downtown MOU outlines an agreed upon approach for the City and County to coordinate planning activities for a Government Center and downtown Salinas as provided in the Downtown Vibrancy Plan (DVP) and to commit staff and financial resources to undertake identified planning activities. The three primary areas of coordinating and planning are: Parking Planning Activities; Land Use; and Mobility and Safety.

The term of the Downtown MOU is five years, expiring March 21, 2027. The terms of the MOU require that an annual review, including an update on the Schedule of Performance (Exhibit A to the MOU), be presented to the Board in January of each year. Staff from both agencies will continue to meet quarterly to review implementation progress and collaborate on other opportunities that arise. In addition to general coordination meetings, staff will continue to have more focused meetings on downtown parking and housing matters. This report provides a summary of the Downtown MOU terms and provisions, which is provided as Attachment A to this report.

Staff recommends that the Board of Supervisors approve the MOU and provide direction to staff.

DISCUSSION:

Background

Since 2012, the County and the City have worked together under an MOU to develop a comprehensive planning and implementation program for a multi-agency campus-style Government Center located in and around downtown Salinas. Such collaboration was vital given each agency owns and/or occupies a significant share of downtown properties. This concentration of government offices in the downtown is beneficial for the efficient and effective provision of many government services and functions and is a key component of the economic health and well-being of downtown Salinas.

In 2015, the Downtown MOU was updated to acknowledge the mutual acceptance of the Downtown Vibrancy Plan (DVP) as a strategic planning document to guide the revitalization of downtown Salinas, including a comprehensively planned Government Center, and to agree to coordinate and collaborate on DVP implementation activities. The term of the 2015 MOU expired on October 31, 2020. In February 2021 the City Council and Board of Supervisors directed staff to return with an updated MOU for consideration as soon as possible, but no later than June 30, 2021. Since February 2021, City and County staff have worked diligently on the MOU update. Additional time was required to allow for more detailed discussion of parking planning activities to outline anticipated planning steps, timelines and roles and responsibilities.

2022 MOU Update

The 2022 Downtown MOU has three primary areas of focus for County and City planning coordination and collaboration on Government Center and DVP implementation.

Parking Planning Activities

Under the 2022 Downtown MOU, the County and City (Parties) agree to work collaboratively toward a long-term parking solution, including undertaking planning activities to determine the feasibility of a joint use parking facility (Parking Facility). Section 1 of the MOU outlines how the Parties are to coordinate to undertake the planning activities identified in Exhibit A to the Downtown MOU (Planning Activities). Key provisions include the following:

- A. The City will lead Planning Activities, in coordination with the County.
- B. Parties will designate staff who will meet at least monthly to: a) jointly develop project goals, objectives and actions; b) prepare scopes of work and review proposals for requested Planning Activities; c) share Planning Activity progress and expenditure reports; and d) create and execute a community engagement strategy.
- C. The County and City will contribute fifty percent (50%) each of the costs of Planning Activities, as outlined in Exhibit C of the MOU. At this time the County Board of Supervisors has appropriated up to \$500,000, \$200,000 of which will fund County staff and internal costs and up to \$300,000 to pay for its portion of Planning Activity costs.
- D. Bring forward any approval documents related to a proposed Parking Facility to its respective governing body for consideration.
- E. Negotiate in good faith to determine the appropriate ownership/leasing structure and agreement for a proposed Parking Facility, including identifying roles for the long-term management and financial support of the Parking Facility (the "Site Management Agreement").

Exhibit A to the Downtown MOU, a Schedule of Performance for Parking Facility Planning, includes a list of Planning Activities, identifies the lead party for implementation, and provides estimated completion dates.

Land Use

The 2022 Downtown MOU provides that the Parties will coordinate and consider the Government Center’s relationship with surrounding land uses and plans and will incorporate the vision identified within the DVP into all future land use planning activities in the downtown. Section 2 of the MOU outlines how the Parties are to coordinate to undertake the planning activities identified in Exhibit A to the Downtown MOU (Planning Activities). Key provisions include the following:

A. Conduct studies and fiscal assessments necessary to evaluate County and City facility uses and needs

B. Explore mixed use, affordable housing, and/or open space opportunities on County or City-owned properties in the downtown area

C. Evaluate the potential reuse, preservation or replacement of County or City-owned historic buildings in downtown.

Safety and Mobility

The MOU calls for the Parties to collaborate on efforts to provide for attractive, safe and convenient pedestrian linkages and green/open spaces between and among all government facilities consistent with the DVP.

Other Provisions

Term: 5 years (March 2022 to March 2027). The period of performance may be extended or shortened by written agreement of the Parties.

Schedule of Performance: Annual Report on Schedules of Performance are to be provided to the City Council and Board of Supervisors in January each year.

Amendments/Revisions: The MOU and/or Schedules of Performance may be amended by written consent and agreement of both Parties.

Right of Entry: Outlines the terms and conditions for Parties and their representatives to enter upon the other Party’s property to conduct Planning Activities.

CEQA CONSIDERATION:

Section 15061 (b) (3) of CEQA Guidelines states that when it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question, in this case the adoption of an MOU, may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA. This MOU outlines the City and County’s intent for planning and policy coordination for the Downtown Government Center and downtown Salinas including Planning Activities for a Parking Facility. If recommended policies or actions progress to a “project” level further CEQA analysis will be required to address potential environmental impacts of the proposed project.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The Office of County Counsel reviewed the MOU and approved it as to form. The Housing and Community Development Department (HCD) has worked collaboratively with the Public Works,

Facilities and Parks Department (PWFP), County Health Department and other County staff (as appropriate) attend monthly City/County coordination meetings and along with City staff contributed to the development of identified focus area objectives, Planning Activities and the Schedule of Performance.

In February 2022, the City took lead to make the draft 2022 Downtown MOU available for public comment. The draft MOU was posted on the City's website, with notice being sent to downtown stakeholders including the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce, Salinas City Center Improvement Association (SCCIA), and Salinas Planning and Research Corporation (SPARC). Written comments to the City and County on the Downtown MOU were received from February 7, 2022, to February 25, 2022. One public comment letter was received from the SCCIA, which supports the MOU. On March 9, 2022, County staff notified property owners within 300 feet of the County's Alisal Government Center property that the draft MOU is available on the County's website for comment and alerting them that the Board and Salinas City Council plan to consider the MOU at their respective regular meetings on March 22, 2022.

The Board of Supervisor's Ad Hoc Committee related to City-County coordination met jointly with the City's Ad Hoc Committee on March 7, 2022, to review the MOU and the public comment letter received to date.

FINANCING:

There is no financial impact to the General Fund to consider and approve this MOU. HCD staff time to develop the draft 2022 Downtown MOU is funded as part of the Fiscal Year 2021-22 Adopted Budget the HCD Administration Appropriation Unit HCD001, Budget Unit 8542.

On June 22, 2021, the Board of Supervisors authorized \$500,000 to be funded from CIP FY 21-22 (Project 8419) to match the City funding to conduct feasibility analysis and planning activities for the proposed Parking Facility. The MOU identifies that the City and County each will contribute equally toward the costs associated with Planning Activities of the Parking Facility, as outlined in Exhibit A, for a total not to exceed amount of \$600,000 (\$300,000 each). Each party is responsible for contributing and funding staff time related to this agreement, which is in addition to the \$600,000. The County will retain the remaining \$200,000 of the total \$500,000 appropriated for the proposed Parking Facility project to directly fund its staff time, for the completion of a downtown parking needs analysis for County facilities, or other County-specific analyses or activities deemed necessary by staff.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:

Approving the MOU supports the Board of Supervisors' Strategic Initiatives for Infrastructure and Economic Development through the coordination of resources and public services between the City and the County in downtown Salinas.

- Economic Development
- Administration
- Health & Human Services
- Infrastructure
- Public Safety

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Reviewed by: Lindsay Lerable, Chief of Facilities

Approved by: Erik V. Lundquist, AICP, Director of Housing and Community Development

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The following attachments are on file with the Clerk of the Board:

Attachment A - Draft 2022 Downtown MOU

Attachment B - Public Correspondence