

Legislation Text

File #: Resolution 29-2018, **Version:** 1

Agenda Date: 06/05/2018

Subject:

A resolution authorizing an Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA) with the Regional Transportation District (RTD) regarding reimbursement funding for the Mineral Station Area Framework planning process

Presented By: Jocelyn Mills and Dennis Swain, Community Development Department
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REQUESTED COUNCIL ACTION:

Does city council support approving an IGA with RTD for reimbursement funding for the Mineral Station Area Framework planning process?

BACKGROUND:

The city did originally enter into an IGA with RTD for the Mineral Area Light Rail Planning area in 2014. That project was recently completed and approved by council this year. Due to a 2017 audit of RTD by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the city must amend the IGA to be reimbursed expenditures as originally proposed. This resolution would execute that requirement.

The following provides an overview of the progress and steps that have occurred for this project.

- In 2013, the city received a Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grant through RTD and the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) for station area master planning at both the Mineral and the Downtown Littleton light rail stations. The grant required the study areas and resulting master plans be a guide for future development and redevelopment of the station areas using Transit Oriented Development (TOD) principles. The intent of the project was to establish master plans for these areas.
- The FTA grant for the Mineral Station Area Framework was \$75,000 with an \$18,750 match by the city.
- In 2014, a contract between RTD and the city was established for the two station area planning projects. During the same timeframe, an Urban Land Institute Technical Advisory Panel was convened to assess the Mineral Light Rail station. The recommendation of this panel was to add a parking structure to the station to “free up land for high quality urban development to include residential and retail.”
- In 2015, the city bid the project and hired the firm of Progressive Urban Management Associates (PUMA) for the projects. The Mineral Station Area master planning was to start first.
- In 2016, PUMA began the Mineral Light Rail Station Area Master Plan project and process. Two main tasks of the project were to undertake a market assessment of the Mineral Station, and ensure the project and content of the plan was vetted through a thorough community engagement process.
- The Mineral Station Area Market Assessment was completed by PUMA in May 2016. It provided analysis of the area for future development and redevelopment. One of the main outcomes of this analysis indicated that there was not the market pressure for redevelopment of the Mineral Station Light

Rail property in this market cycle.

- The community engagement process included formation of a steering committee with representatives from: RTD, DRCOG, city council, planning commission, Wolhurst Landing residential neighborhood, Aspen Grove shopping center, and South Suburban Parks and Recreation District. Two open houses and two community public meetings were held between March and August 2016, and community input was also received on-line. PUMA began a working document to form the basis for a Mineral Station Area Master Plan.
- Community Development staff presented an overview to planning commission on all of the community comments provided on the project to date, in November 2016. During this study session, commissioners reiterated to staff to ensure the content of the plan took direction from the community input.
- Staff then assessed the working document against community input. Public comments indicated it was difficult for community members to provide constructive input for future development and redevelopment within the station area, without a clear understanding of the future traffic and parking impacts (how would a road expansion of the intersection of Mineral and Santa Fe impact the light rail station, and how would an expansion of the light rail line to Lucent impact parking needs at the Mineral Station?). The scope of the working document was unable to address the underlying issues of community concern around traffic and parking.
- In early 2017, RTD underwent an audit of the FTA grant funding program. The city had several meetings with RTD, and in early October, 2017, RTD informed the city that its contractual procedures had been revised. As a result, RTD needed to establish a new IGA for the Mineral Light Rail Station Area planning project, and would fund the grant for the planning project with non-federal funds.
- In late 2017, city council directed staff to revise the scope of this planning process and create a plan with actionable steps that the city and community can use to support future decision-making for this area with respect to transportation, recreation/parks, open space and trails, land uses, and character and design.
- From January through March 2018, the Mineral Station Area Framework document was reviewed by the community for input, and by planning commission and city council in study sessions for additional input and direction. A finalized draft plan was established as a result.
- The Mineral Station Framework was then formally adopted by city council on March 20, 2018. It is intended to provide direction to the city's efforts to improve South Santa Fe Drive and the Santa Fe and Mineral Avenue intersection, and to guide future planning and decision-making for this area. Future decision-making has the potential to enhance the fiscal health and sustainability of the city, and to continue to strengthen the city's sense of community and livability. The Framework is attached to this staff communication.
- RTD provided the city with the new IGA in May (2018) and it is attached to this staff communication. The IGA will reimburse the city \$75,000 with non-federal funds. RTD has been provided with the adopted Mineral Station Area Framework and it meets the intent of its requirements as a plan for the Mineral Station area.

STAFF ANALYSIS:

While the original scope and IGA for this project did change, the city did hire and expend the funds as outlined in the original 2014 IGA with RTD. The overall project cost was \$93,750. The grant awarded by the FTA was \$75,000. Due to the audit RTD underwent in 2017 for its FTA grant funding, the city was unable to be reimbursed until a new IGA with RTD could be established. The new IGA is the purpose of this resolution. In order for the city to be reimbursed the funds, the new IGA is required to be authorized by city council. Additionally, RTD has the Mineral Station Area Framework and it meets the intent of its requirement as a plan

for the Mineral Station area.

FISCAL IMPACTS:

If the IGA is approved, the city will be reimbursed \$75,000. This money was spent on the planning process to create the Mineral Station Area Framework document.

OPTIONS/ALTERNATIVES:

The following options and alternatives are available:

1. Approve the IGA with RTD and the city will be reimbursed the \$75,000 for creation of the Mineral Station Area Framework document.
2. Not approve the IGA with RTD and the city will not be reimbursed the \$75,000 for creation of the Mineral Station Area Framework document.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the resolution.

PROPOSED MOTION:

I move to approve the resolution authorizing an IGA between the City of Littleton and the Regional Transportation District for reimbursement funds of \$75,000.