



## Legislation Text

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Resolution Authorizing Contract # 2016-10447 for Downtown Business Improvement District (BID) Services

Department: Executive  
Council District: 3

Public Hearing: 5/17/2016  
Advertising Date/By: 5/5/2016 and 5/12/2016

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### **PURPOSE:**

The City of Greensboro has maintained contracted services to enhance the Downtown Business Improvement District (BID) since the 1990s. North Carolina State Legislation authorizes a contractor to perform, promote and develop services funded by a special municipal service district tax. Downtown BID property owners currently pay approximately \$600,000 annually into a municipal service district tax fund that may be used for the specific purpose of service and/or property improvement enhancements within the BID. A public hearing and Council approval of the award of a three-year contract with two potential one-year renewal options for Downtown Business Improvement District Services is required to execute municipal service district tax funded contracts.

### **BACKGROUND:**

Original North Carolina State legislation under NCGS 160A-536(d) allows the provision of funds levied and collected by the City from ad valorem property taxes in the Downtown BID to be spent on contracted services to perform, promote and develop services, facilities, functions and promotional and developmental activities in a municipal service district. The eligible services are in addition to or to a greater extent than those financed, provided, or maintained for the remaining areas of the City including but not limited to: (i) Economic and Business Development, (ii) Safety and Maintenance, and (iii) Marketing and Downtown Greensboro Promotions.

In September of 2015, the North Carolina Legislature adopted new requirements (effective October 1, 2015) requiring 1) public input prior to conducting a competitive solicitation and 2) the governing body holding a public hearing to consider and authorize the execution of contracts that use funds from municipal service districts. Under the updated legislation, future contract addendums or amendments, including renewals approved in this resolution, will also require a public hearing and City Council authorization.

City staff implemented various processes and procedures to comply with the updated State legislative requirements. A needs assessment survey was created and circulated by City staff in January of 2016 to obtain public input and inform the development of a Request for Proposals for various eligible services. To engage public participation, the survey was advertised on the City's website, postcards were mailed to downtown residents and businesses and a public meeting was conducted by staff to answer questions and provide

assistance with the online survey submittal process. Over 100 stakeholders participated in the survey, which informed staff of the public interests in potential Downtown BID service types and objectives. The survey feedback provided a basis for development of a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) for Downtown Business Improvement District Services and was publicly available on the City website for prospective proposers to consider.

In support of the M/WBE Program Plan, the RFP was developed to provide opportunities for multiple firms to manage a total of up to five services including Economic Development, Planning & Development, Marketing and Communication, Public Space Management and Event Management. Competitive proposals from firms providing limited services were included in the solicitation specifications.

The Centralized Contracting Division conducted the solicitation in the online Greensboro Electronic Procurement System (GePS) Event #8109. An outreach email was sent to twenty-five potential contractors, including five certified M/WBE firms recommended by the M/WBE Office. Eight hundred and sixty-nine vendor contacts registered under the event commodity codes also received automatic email notifications of the contract opportunities. A total of two business enterprises submitted responses to the RFP. Of those responding business enterprises, none were State certified M/WBE firms.

The non-profit agency, Downtown Greensboro, Inc., submitted a proposal for the full range of services requested in the RFP. The firm, Qub Studios, submitted a proposal for two of the services, marketing and event management. A multi-departmental selection committee, including an M/WBE Office staff member, reviewed and ranked the proposals. The committee determined that Downtown Greensboro Inc's submittal was more comprehensive and closely aligned with the requested service needs and provides the best value for the City, ranking it highest among the two submittals. The DGI proposal includes their plan to contract with the North Carolina state certified firms, SP3- Sharp Pursuits, an MBE firm, to co-manage the Greensboro Fun Fourth Festival; Boulton Creative, a WBE firm, to partner on advertising campaigns to brand downtown Greensboro as a safe place to live, work and play; and McCants Communications, an MBE firm, to provide communications consulting services.

**BUDGET IMPACT:**

Funds for this contract in the amount of approximately \$600,000 (subject to tax receipts) will be available in fiscal year 2016-17. Funding for subsequent years is subject to future City Council appropriations.

**RECOMMENDATION / ACTION REQUESTED:**

The Centralized Contracting Division and Executive Department concur in their recommendation for the award of a three-year Downtown Business Improvement District (BID) contract including Economic Development, Planning & Development, Marketing and Communication, Public Space Management and Event Management services. Council approval of a resolution authorizing Contract # 2016-10447 for Downtown Business Improvement District (BID) Services is requested.

**COMMITTEE ACTION:** This item was referred to Council by the General Government Committee.