



MEMORANDUM

TO: MRA Board of Commissioners

FROM: Ellen Buchanan, Director *EB*

DATE: February 14, 2022

SUBJECT: MRA Communications Specialist Position Authorization

One of the strongest recommendations in the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) communication plan, Public Communication and Collaboration, was that the City should “create a full communications, community engagement, and public information department”. Until such time as that department is in place, the MRA is in need of an additional full-time staff person who “can provide and/or oversee Media Relations/Public Information, Branding/Marketing and Community Engagement specifically for the MRA”. As you are aware from the discussion about the URD II Strategic Exit Plan, communications was a primary driver for creation of the MRA working group. We now have a plan, have begun creating informational materials, are developing web content and have created and are using summary cover sheets for project funding requests.

The City’s Communications and Human Resource offices have finalized a job description and established where it fits in the City’s 2022 Classification and Compensation Plan; consequently, we now have the tools that we need to move forward with filling the recommended position. When we were developing the FY22 MRA Budget, the position had not been created, described or classified with respect to salary range. Now that we are in a position to move forward with hiring, we need for the Board to authorize the position and take it to the City Council for approval of an FY22 Budget Amendment, which is on your agenda following this item. As was stated in an earlier memo, we anticipate that this position will transition from full-time MRA staff to part-time working for both the Communications Office and the MRA. It is uncertain as to when that transition might happen, but we do know that there is a substantial amount of work to be done just for MRA at this time.

Recommendation: Staff recommends that the MRA Board authorize the inclusion of the Communications Specialist position in the MRA FY22 Budget and direct staff to initiate the hiring process.