

**From:** [thebig](#) [REDACTED]  
**To:** [-- City Clerk; -- City Council](#)  
**Subject:** Time Line for Report on M-Group and related issues  
**Date:** Monday, August 7, 2023 5:49:16 PM

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i want to advise that it is my wish that the City Council and City Clerk, that based on the below report by the Grand Jury, that the full timeline for discussion be not amended by Peggy Flynn but instead be follow the recommended timeline.

regards,

Jeffrey Roden

Sonoma County Civil Grand Jury determined that:

- F1. The City of Petaluma has continued to contract with M-Group for the past 14 years and has failed to conduct a formal performance review, cost-benefit analysis, or new RFP to determine if the level of costs can be improved.
- F2. The amount of money flowing from the City to M-Group has increased over the life of the contracts due to the increase in development activity and M-Group's rate increases. The City has failed to provide a cost-benefit analysis justifying the continuing issuance of contracts.
- F3. The City has failed to conduct a cost-benefit analysis to determine if base level services could be filled with City employees and reduce overall costs.
- F4. The City of Petaluma recently hired a director of community development, demonstrating an interest in increasing oversight, however, the City has failed to consider hiring FTE employees in base level services positions.
- F5. The City has failed to require M-Group employees working in the planning department to wear identifying badges or logos that would inform the public that they are interacting with contractors and not City employees.

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- F6. The City has failed to require M-Group employees working in the planning department to include the M-Group logo or company name in their email signatures.

The Sonoma County Civil Grand Jury recommends that:

- R1. By December 31, 2023, the City completes a cost-benefit analysis of using a private firm versus employees to staff the planning department. (F1, F2, F3, F4)
- R2. By no later than March 1, 2024, the City opens an RFP for planning services and considers a combination of city employees and private contractors to staff the planning department. (F1, F3)
- R3. By September 30, 2023, the City requires M-Group to provide badges or logos to their employees that identify them as M-Group employees. (F5)
- R4. By August 31, 2023, the City requires M-Group to direct their employees to include their firm's logo and or name in their email signature. (F6)
- R5. By August 31, 2023, the City includes an M-Group designation on each staff listing under the planning staff directory on the website. (F7)

R6. By December 31, 2023, the City conducts a formal survey of the citizens of Petaluma to better understand their awareness and understanding of the outsourcing of the planning department and their experiences interacting with M-Group employees. (F5, F6, F7)

The City agrees with findings F6, F7 and disagrees wholly or partially with findings F1, F2, F3,

F4, F5. The City has implemented recommendations R1, R3, R4, R5. The City has not yet implemented, and will not be implementing in the future recommendation R6 as it is narrowly recommended. The City has not yet implemented, and will be implementing in the future recommendation R2 at the conclusion of the current contract with M-Group.