



Local Agency Formation Commission of Napa County

Subdivision of the State of California

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We Manage Local Government Boundaries, Evaluate Municipal Services, and Protect Agriculture

Agenda Item 7e

TO: Local Agency Formation Commission

PREPARED BY: Brendon Freeman, Analyst

MEETING DATE: December 1, 2014

SUBJECT: Selection of On-Call California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Consultant

RECOMMENDATION

By motion, select Ascent Environmental, Inc. for on-call CEQA consulting services and authorize the Commission Chair to execute a contract for services subject to the prior review and approval of the written contract by the Executive Officer and Commission Counsel.

ANALYSIS

In accordance with the Commission's direction from the October 6, 2014 special meeting, a Request for Proposals (RFP) process was undertaken. Staff received and reviewed proposals from seven consulting firms in total. The caliber and quality of all proposals was high with each firm appearing to be capable, professional and qualified to perform the scope of services needed by the Commission.

Staff recommends Ascent Environmental, Inc. for the following reasons:

- Deemed most responsive
- Appears highly professional and qualified to provide CEQA consulting services
- May be able to assist the Commission in developing new and improved processes with respect to its role as either lead agency or responsible agency for complex or unique projects
- Reference checks were entirely positive

Ascent Environmental, Inc. has agreed to meet the scope of services outlined in the RFP at a competitive cost. Core services to be provided include the following:

- Provide LAFCO with information and advice on environmental issues that may impact projects including an opinion as to the scope of environmental documentation (EIR or Negative Declaration) that will be required.
- Adequately address the requirements for reviewing projects under CEQA.
- Offer interpretations and advice regarding CEQA documents and processes.
- Work in partnership with LAFCO's Executive Officer and Legal Counsel to develop a strategy for CEQA compliance.
- Draft comments in accordance with LAFCO policies in response to initial studies.
- Draft CEQA-related language for use in staff reports, Commission resolutions, and other related documents.

Joan Bennett, Vice Chair
Councilmember, City of American Canyon

Brad Wagenknecht, Commissioner
County of Napa Supervisor, 1st District

Brian J. Kelly, Chair
Representative of the General Public

Greg Pitts, Commissioner
Councilmember, City of St. Helena

Bill Dodd, Commissioner
County of Napa Supervisor, 4th District

Gregory Rodeno, Alternate Commissioner
Representative of the General Public

Juliana Inman, Alternate Commissioner
Councilmember, City of Napa

Mark Luce, Alternate Commissioner
County of Napa Supervisor, 2nd District

Laura Snideman
Executive Officer

These and additional services will be incorporated into a final service agreement. Additional parameters for the agreement include:

- A two-year term with two additional one-year options for extension
- An additional review and written report regarding current LAFCO CEQA procedures
- Initial outreach meetings with key public agencies

Negotiations will occur for the possibility of a monthly retainer, hourly rates at guaranteed levels for the terms of the agreement, and work for certain pending key projects.

ATTACHMENT

- 1) Ascent Environmental, Inc. Proposal Cover Letter



November 3, 2014

Laura Snideman
Local Area Formation Commission of Napa County
1030 Seminary Street, Suite B
Napa, California 94559

Subject: Proposal for California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Consultant Services

Dear Ms. Snideman:

Please accept this proposal to provide CEQA Consultant Services to Local Area Formation Commission (LAFCO) of Napa County. Ascent understands that a variety of environmental support services would be required under a contract related to CEQA procedures, strategic guidance, and administration. This could include preparation of staff reports, scheduling and conducting hearings, and working collaboratively with LAFCO's CEQA counsel. We also understand that LAFCO desires a firm that can provide recommendations and staff support for day-to-day environmental procedures and reviews that LAFCO implements. Above all, LAFCO is seeking a consultant that can assist with implementation of standard procedures for conducting environmental reviews, administration of the environmental process, and provide recommendations on how best to navigate the environmental and regulatory environments with consistency, quality, and cost-effectiveness in mind.

Ascent has the qualifications and the technical capabilities necessary to effectively support LAFCO's CEQA needs. We have extensive experience managing similar on-call/strategic support contracts for a variety of public agencies including the Napa County Department of Public Works. Ascent also has local knowledge of Napa County and annexation requirements through its recent preparation of the Napa County Jail EIR, which included City of Napa and Napa Sanitation District sphere of influence amendments. Our proposed principal-in-charge/contract manager, Amanda Olekszulyn, specializes in community planning, annexations (e.g. fire and water district and municipal service reviews) and has direct local Napa County knowledge and experience. Further, the Ascent team includes Gary Jakobs, AICP as a CEQA strategist. Gary has over 30 years of professional experience and specializes in CEQA and NEPA compliance projects, including the complex and controversial City of Folsom South of U.S. 50 Annexation EIR/EIS. Gary and Amanda also worked together on the City of Sacramento's Greenbriar Development Project Annexation EIR for which the City of Sacramento and the Sacramento LAFCO served as co-lead agencies under CEQA.

We understand that specific assignments are not yet known; therefore, an itemized cost proposal cannot be provided at this time. However, Ascent has included our schedule of fees for staff expected to be involved in this contract (see Section 4). This proposal remains valid for 90 days following submittal. We have reviewed and concur with the terms and conditions of the LAFCO's sample professional services agreement and do not have a potential conflict of interest.

Thank you for your consideration of our submittal. I am your primary point of contact for this effort. Please do not hesitate to contact me at 916.930.3183 or Amanda.Olekszulin@ascentenvironmental.com, if you have any questions or require further information.

Sincerely,



Amanda Olekszulin
Principal

Ascent Environmental, Inc.
Federal Identification Number: 27-1537109