



Lou Ann Teixeira
 Executive Officer

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<i>Public Member</i> | Michael R. McGill
<i>Special District Member</i> |
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| Sean Wright
<i>City Member</i> |

August 12, 2020 (Agenda)

August 12, 2020
 Agenda Item 9

Contra Costa Local Agency Formation Commission
 40 Muir Road, 1st Floor
 Martinez, CA 94553

Authorize Service Contract – Environmental Planning Services

Dear Members of the Commission:

DISCUSSION

The FY 2020-21 LAFCO Budget includes funding for various professional services which provide maximum staffing and budgetary flexibility.

One of the contract services provided to LAFCO is environmental planning. Since 2008, Contra Costa LAFCO has retained Lamphier-Gregory for “as-needed” environmental planning services. We recently learned that our planner, Nat Taylor, is retiring.

Given the change in Lamphier Gregory staffing, and that LAFCO last issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for planning services in 2011, it is timely to go out to bid for planning services. In June 2020, LAFCO released an RFP and scope of services which includes the following:

- Reviews and provides comments on LAFCO applications and projects
- Reviews and provides comments on environmental documents prepared by outside agencies
- Assists with preparing environmental documents for LAFCO projects
- Assists with development of new, and reviews existing, LAFCO policies and procedures
- Attends LAFCO hearings, meetings with applicants, and other meetings as needed

The RFP was posted on the Contra Costa LAFCO and CALAFCO websites and was sent to approximately 15 planning firms. The deadline for submittal was July 17, 2020. Proposals were submitted by the following proposers (copies of the proposals are available upon request):

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| ✚ Grasseti Environmental Consulting | ✚ Planwest Partners., Inc. |
| ✚ E Mulberg & Associates | ✚ QK |
| ✚ Loewke Planning Associates, Inc. | ✚ SWALE, Inc. |

The proposals include sole practitioners, small firms, and consultant teams and vary in the number of team members/firms, experience with LAFCO, location/home base, clientele, and cost. All six proposals are acceptable, and all offer environmental planning as well as LAFCO experience.

A screening committee composed of LAFCO professionals **Rachel Jones**, Executive Officer, Alameda LAFCO and **Martha Poyatos**, Executive Officer, San Mateo LAFCO, along with your Executive Officer reviewed the proposals. Your Executive Officer followed up with each team with questions to gauge the consultants' understanding of the required tasks, proposed approach to planning services, experience and familiarity with LAFCO, qualifications of personnel who would be assigned to work with the Contra Costa LAFCO, potential conflicts, cost and other factors.

Following initial screening and review of work products, LAFCO staff conducted interviews and references checks with the top proposers. While all six proposers are qualified and can provide the needed services, it is recommended that the Commission retain SWALE, Inc. to provide environmental planning services to Contra Costa LAFCO.

SWALE, Inc. is a small, woman-owned consulting firm located in Grass Valley, CA. Kateri Harrison is the CEO. SWALE, Inc. partnered with Baracco & Associates for this proposal. SWALE, Inc. also offers contracted technical expertise in the areas of geology, air quality, hydrology, engineering, legal, traffic circulation, noise, climate and hazards. SWALE, Inc. and Baracco Associates are recommended for the following reasons:

- Ms. Harrison has over 25 years of environmental, land use and planning experience. She holds graduate and undergraduate degrees in Ecology & Systematic Biology and Environmental Studies, respectively. Her land use planning experience includes serving as staff to Alameda and Nevada counties and as Planning Commissioner for the City of Grass Valley. Ms. Harrison served as a subconsultant on the Bay Delta Conservation Plan. She also has LAFCO experience having worked as project manager and MSR consultant for Butte, Solano, Nevada, Placer, Mendocino, and Santa Clara LAFCOs and for the Byron Bethany Irrigation District.
- Mr. Baracco has extensive experience in land use planning and environmental review, along with significant LAFCO experience. He holds graduate and undergraduate degrees in Urban Planning and City and Regional Planning, respectively. He previously served as a LAFCO Executive Officer for 14 years. Mr. Baracco prepared numerous MSRs for Contra Costa, Napa, and Santa Clara LAFCOs. He worked on several Contra Costa LAFCO MSRs including the 2007-08 East County Subregional MSR, 2009 Reclamation Services, and the 2011 Law Enforcement Services MSR.
- The proposal presents a solid understanding of land use, environmental planning and LAFCO issues.
- The proposal presents a highly qualified team with extensive experience conducting environmental analyses in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).
- The team has significant experience working with counties, cities, and other public agencies throughout the State.
- The team presents a cost-effective proposal.

RECOMMENDATION

Authorize staff to execute a contract with SWALE, Inc. to provide as-needed environmental planning services from September 1, 2020 through August 31, 2021 as provided for in the FY 2020-21 budget.

Sincerely,

LOU ANN TEXEIRA
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

c: Distribution