



Staff Report

File #: 23-0947

REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION

DATE: 12/06/2023

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Planning & Development Department

SUBJECT:

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH INTERWEST CONSULTING GROUP PURSUANT TO REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL 24-023SB IN THE AMOUNT OF \$214,930 FOR THE PREPARATION OF AN AMENDMENT TO THE CORONA DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION SPECIFIC PLAN AND PREPARATION OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This staff report asks the City Council to award a Professional Services Agreement to Interwest Consulting to prepare an amendment to Corona's Downtown Revitalization Specific Plan to incorporate the recommendations of the Design Guidelines prepared in conjunction with the City's 2022 Downtown Revitalization Plan. The 2022 Downtown Revitalization Plan was prepared to help guide the redevelopment of the City's historic downtown by including a downtown vision and separate design guidelines. Corona's Downtown Revitalization Specific Plan was adopted in 1998 and is the City's regulatory document for development standards and land uses in the downtown. The amendment to the specific plan will incorporate development recommendations, architectural and design standards, and circulation recommendations for the Sixth Street Corridor from the Design Guidelines into the Downtown Revitalization Specific Plan.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the City Council:

- a. Award Request for Proposal 24-023SB to Interwest Consulting Group to prepare an amendment to the Corona Downtown Revitalization Specific Plan and prepare an environmental analysis in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act.
- b. Authorize the City Manager, or his designee, to execute the Professional Services Agreement with Interwest Consulting Group in the amount of \$214,930, including any substantive

extensions, change orders, purchase orders, and amendments up to the amount authorized in [Corona Municipal Code Section 3.08.070\(I\)](#), which is equivalent to 10% or \$21,493.

- c. Authorize an appropriation in the amount of \$214,930 from the General Fund 110 to the Planning and Development Department's operating budget.
- d. Authorize the City Manager, or his designee, to issue a Purchase Order to Interwest Consulting Group in the amount of \$214,930.

BACKGROUND & HISTORY:

Downtown Revitalization Specific Plan

The Corona Downtown Revitalization Specific Plan was adopted in 1998. Extensive public outreach occurred in preparing the specific plan, which included a Downtown Advisory Committee consisting of 16 members, an all-day community charette on a Saturday that included 200 members from the public to create a Vision Plan for the downtown and the distribution of 100 questionnaires to public officials, business leaders and citizens to receive input on the downtown.

The Downtown Revitalization Specific Plan covers 621 acres and established the land uses, development standards and design guidelines for the downtown that continue to exist today. The land uses in the core of the downtown, which primarily encompasses the properties at the intersection of Sixth Street and Main Street, including the Corona Mall, focus on commercial uses that serve community wide needs in a pedestrian friendly environment. The plan also allows mixed-use development that would include a combination of commercial and residential development.

2022 Downtown Revitalization Plan

The 2022 Downtown Revitalization Plan was spearheaded by the City's Economic Development Department to re-evaluate the vision for the downtown. This effort also included the creation of design guidelines to aid in the future redevelopment of the downtown. The Design Guidelines prepared for Downtown Corona focus on building typologies, building placement, scale, architecture, entrances, and exterior building lighting that are intended to attract people to downtown and create a pedestrian environment that requires people to park and shop.

The vision plan adopted in 1998 by the Downtown Revitalization Specific Plan and the vision plan discussed in the 2022 Downtown Revitalization Plan is similar in that the goal is to have an active, multifaceted downtown that people will want to visit for shopping, eating and entertainment; and to have downtown re-established to its previous form as a traditional town setting. The Design Guidelines presented with the 2022 Downtown Revitalization Plan provide updated recommendations on how to best achieve that vision using building typologies and building placement instead of conventional development standards. The intent is to have new development or redeveloped buildings be consistent with the historic built environment in a contemporary manner.

The final 2022 Downtown Revitalization Plan and Design Guidelines were presented and discussed with the City Council at its meeting on September 21, 2022. The Design Guidelines is not a regulatory document like the Downtown Revitalization Specific Plan. The City Council was made aware that the implementation of the Design Guidelines presented in conjunction with the 2022

Downtown Revitalization Plan would need to be incorporated into the Downtown Revitalization Specific Plan as a specific plan amendment. The Professional Services Agreement (PSA) with Interwest Consulting would allow the consultant to collaborate with city staff on incorporating recommendations from the Design Guidelines into the specific plan by a specific plan amendment.

ANALYSIS:

The City released Request for Proposal (RFP) 24-023SB for the preparation of a specific plan amendment to Corona’s Downtown Revitalization Specific Plan on September 14, 2023. The scope of work outlined in the RFP includes:

1. Review and evaluation of the 2022 Downtown Revitalization Plan/Design Guidelines and Downtown Revitalization Specific Plan.
2. Prepare outline of Specific Plan Amendment.
3. Hold stakeholder meetings.
4. Prepare draft Specific Plan Amendment for public review and input, and City Council Study Session.
5. Prepare Negative Declaration pursuant to CEQA.
6. Prepare Final Specific Plan Amendment and attend public hearings.

The RFP submittal closing date was on October 12, 2023. The City notified 700 external vendors and 270 vendors registered with the City on Plant Bids. At the close of the due date, the City received six proposals.

The review panel consisted of five city staff. The evaluation criteria used to rank the proposals consisted of a) Completeness of Response, b) Qualification of Firm, c) Qualification of Personnel, d) Work Plan/Project Understanding and Approach, and e) Value. Based on the total score from the review panel, the top ranked firm was Interwest Consulting Group.

Firm	Location	Final Ranking
Interwest Consulting Group	Irvine, CA	1
CASC Engineering & Consulting, Inc.	Colton, CA	2
Psomas	Santa Ana, CA	3
The Arroyo Group	Pasadena, CA	4
JZMK Partners	Costa Mesa, CA	Fail
Wise Business Plans, LLC	Las Vegas, NV	Fail

Similar Work by Interwest Consulting

Interwest Consulting is currently working with the following cities on similar projects.

- City of San Dimas Downtown Specific Plan.
- City of Irwindale Zoning Code, Subdivision Regulations and Design Guidelines Update.
- City of Rancho Cordova Zoning Code Update and Design Standards

The city did reach out to the references provided by Interwest Consulting. The responses the city received was Interwest adhered to assigned tasks and met required deadlines, followed direction provided by the local agency, were great to work with on making decisions, and provided a good quality work product.

Timeline

Based on the scope of work, Interwest anticipates it will take 12 months to complete the project from the date of the city's kick-off meeting. The city anticipates having a kick-off meeting in December 2023.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Approval of the recommended actions will result in an appropriation in the amount of \$214,930 from the General Fund 110 to the Planning and Development Department's operating budget. There is sufficient fund balance in the General Fund 110 for the recommended actions.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

This action is exempt pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the Guidelines for the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), which states that a project is exempt from CEQA if the activity is covered by the common sense exemption that CEQA applies only to projects that have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA. The award of this agreement between the City and the consultant pursuant to the city's competitive bidding process has no possibility of having a significant effect on the environment. Therefore, no environmental analysis is required.

PREPARED BY: JOANNE COLETTA, PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

Attachments:

1. Exhibit 1 - Professional Services Agreement with Interwest Consulting Group