



CITY OF COSTA MESA

Agenda Report

77 Fair Drive
Costa Mesa, CA 92626

File #: 25-263

Meeting Date: 5/20/2025

TITLE:

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT FOR ON-CALL ENVIRONMENTAL AND TECHNICAL SERVICES LIST

DEPARTMENT: ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT/PLANNING DIVISION

PRESENTED BY: ANNA MCGILL, PLANNING & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

CONTACT INFORMATION: ANNA MCGILL, PLANNING & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT MANAGER, (714) 754-5609

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the City Council:

1. Approve and authorize the City Manager and City Clerk to execute a three-year Professional Services Agreement (PSA) with two one-year renewals with each consulting firm listed below from July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2030, in substantially the form as attached and in such final form as approved by the City Attorney for on-call staff support for environmental and technical services:
 - Ascent Environmental, Inc.
 - Chambers Group, Inc.
 - Dudek
 - EPD Solutions, Inc.
 - First Carbon Solutions
 - Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.
 - LSA Associates, Inc.
 - Michael Baker International
2. Authorize the City Manager, or designee, and City Clerk to execute the PSA and future amendments with the above listed firms including any potential increases in compensation as long as the amendments are within the annual budget.

BACKGROUND:

The City's Economic and Development Services Department seeks to establish agreements with consultants for on-call environmental and technical services, in connection with major development projects as well as key policy projects. This on-call list would streamline the consulting selection process and overall project timeframe to expedite technical studies and environmental review and is used by the City to fulfill any demands on future or existing projects for technical review and

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) related analysis.

As the City continues to process and implement key planning projects, the City has begun and will continue to see major development projects submitted to the City for review. Major development projects require discretionary review, which involve environmental review in accordance with CEQA regulations. Due to the complexity of environmental review, the City uses technical and environmental consultants to assist staff in the preparation and peer review of CEQA documents, including Environmental Impact Reports, Mitigated Negative Declarations, and technical studies to assess impacts to environmental areas including but not limited to air quality, biological resources, noise, traffic/transportation, and water quality, etc.

The City's current on-call list for environmental and technical consultants expires on June 30, 2025. On March 4, 2025, the City issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for environmental and technical services with the goal of putting in place a new on-call list by July 1, 2025.

ANALYSIS:

On March 20, 2025 the City received seventeen (17) proposals to provide the environmental and technical services. Proposals were screened for compliance with the City's RFP, and proposals were evaluated based on the method of approach, qualifications, and experience, staffing and cost proposal. One consideration was the Department's limited administrative ability to manage more than eight (8) consultant contracts for a particular service, including contract management, expenditure tracking, invoice tracking, and ensuring consistent quality of work product across different consultants.

To ensure an objective selection process, an evaluation committee was assembled to evaluate proposals independently, to assess qualifications and experience to address the City's needs. Proposals were evaluated on the firm's overall track record to conduct CEQA and technical analyses/studies, ability to conduct services in house or with reputable and efficient subconsultants, demonstrated related experience, particularly within Orange County and surrounding Los Angeles/San Diego areas, and ability to provide sufficient resources to respond to the City's requests.

Based on the City's criteria and selection procedures set forth in the RFP, the evaluation committee recommended that agreements be awarded to the top ranking following eight (8) firms for staff support for general planning services:

Staff Support for Environmental and Technical Services

- Ascent Environmental, Inc.
- Chambers Group, Inc.
- Dudek
- EPD Solutions, Inc.
- First Carbon Solutions
- Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.
- LSA Associates, Inc.
- Michael Baker International

When the City requires services, City staff would contact two or more on-call consultants to secure a cost proposal and proposed staffing for the needed service. Under the proposed agreements, consultants will provide support for general environmental and technical services, either at hourly rates in accordance with their contracts or using a not-to-exceed contract amount as stated in cost proposal responses.

Establishing on-call lists would allow the City to quickly secure outside expertise for preparation or peer review of environmental documents or technical studies in any one of the environmental topics covered by CEQA, including air quality, noise, transportation, and water quality.

The proposed on-call list of consultants provides the Department with the spectrum of expertise necessary to support the ongoing and anticipated advanced and current planning projects. An example Professional Services Agreement (PSA) has been attached for reference. Individual PSAs will be executed with each awarded firm. Certain provisions will be customized and/or adapted to the needs of the consultant, but such minor changes will not impact the protections afforded to the City in the agreement.

ALTERNATIVES:

An alternative would be to not move forward with the contracts for on-call technical studies and environmental review services. This decision would impact the City's ability to move development projects quickly and efficiently through environmental review under CEQA, as an RFP would need to be released for each project, resulting in increases to entitlement review timelines. Also, there are several active development projects that would be delayed, as their environmental review processes are currently supported by on-call consultants whose contract(s) will expire prior to the completion of project public hearings.

FISCAL REVIEW:

Consultant services for the preparation or peer review of CEQA documents, including technical documents/studies for parking, traffic/transportation, noise, air quality, etc. are regularly utilized by the Economic and Development Services Department on an as-needed basis. When associated with a development project, the cost for environmental and technical consultant services is paid for by the project applicants as a "pass-through cost". For projects requiring environmental review that are directed by the City Council and the Department, funding is available in the Department's General Fund (Fund 101) and is included in the City's Proposed Fiscal Year 2025-26 Operating Budget. Use of contract services is on an as-needed basis, and the cost of each service varies by subject and task.

LEGAL REVIEW:

The attached sample PSA was prepared by the City Attorney's Office and the staff report has been reviewed and approved as to form.

CITY COUNCIL GOALS AND PRIORITIES:

This item supports the following City Council Goals:

- Diversify, stabilize, and increase housing to reflect community needs.
- Advance environmental sustainability and climate resiliency.

CONCLUSION:

Staff recommends the City Council approve and authorize the City Manager and City Attorney to execute a three-year Professional Service Agreements (PSA) with two one-year renewals for as-needed staff support for environmental and technical services, as well as future amendments to those agreements so long as such amendments are within the annual budget.