

**Request for Qualifications (RFQ)
City of Albany, CA**



**Planning Consulting Services for the
General Plan Update**

Issue Date: October 10, 2012

Deadline for Submissions: November 14, 2012

Background

The City of Albany is a residential community located in northern Alameda County, approximately fourteen (14) miles northeast of San Francisco. The City encompasses 1.7 square miles and is bounded by the City of El Cerrito to the north and the City of Berkeley to the south. The City is bound by San Francisco Bay to the west and has public beach access along the Bay frontage. Both I-80 & I-580 are located in the City limits, on the west side of the City.

The City has two primary commercial corridors, San Pablo Ave. and Solano Ave. The San Pablo Ave. corridor has a variety of businesses establishments including auto repair, restaurants, local bars, and miscellaneous retail. Solano Ave. also has restaurant establishments, locally owned retail businesses, and an independent movie theater among other uses. Mixed use residential buildings are present in both corridors.

The population as of 2010 Census is 18,539. There are 7,889 housing units in the City. The City is largely built out as the housing stock was largely constructed from 1920-1950.

Albany is a Charter City governed by five (5) Councilmembers, elected at large, one of whom serves as Mayor. The City Manager implements policy set by the City Council. In addition, the City's Planning & Zoning Commission is comprised of five (5) Planning & Zoning Commissioners. The Planning & Zoning Commission acts as a recommending body to the City Council and is expected to serve as the Steering Committee for the Update process.

The current Albany General Plan was adopted in 1992, and encompasses a time frame from 1990 – 2010. It is composed of six elements:

- Land Use Element
- Circulation Element
- Housing Element
- Conservation, Recreation & Open Space Element
- Community Health & Safety Element
- General Plan Implementation

Qualifications

The City of Albany is seeking qualifications for professional services from consultants to assist the City with the General Plan update. Ideally, the City is seeking the services of a sole practitioner or small firm to provide assistance with the Update and subcontract as necessary for technical analysis. CEQA review will be contracted separately from this proposal.

City staff will guide the process with the Albany Planning & Zoning Commission acting as Steering Committee. One regular monthly meeting will be designated to start early for review of draft elements. With each meeting, a draft section would be reviewed and feedback provided by the Commission for editing, inclusion, etc. It is expected that the outside consultant will prepare the draft sections for staff and Commission review. The City

is interested in merely refreshing the General Plan to reflect current policies and is not seeking an extensive overhaul as part of the update process. Additionally, there are existing City policies which will be incorporated as part of the new General Plan. This includes:

- Voices to Visions (Albany Waterfront)
- Existing Parks and Recreation Plans
- Active Transportation Plan
- Eastshore State Park General Plan
- Climate Action Plan
- Albany Hill Master Plan
- Arts Master Plan
- Complete Streets study
- Economic Development Strategy
- Gill Tract process

The City of Albany does not have currently have a certified Housing Element. Efforts were made in recent years to prepare a draft Housing Element, though it was not certified by the State Department of Housing & Community Development (HCD). The Housing Element will be updated to reflect the latest Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) requirements recently provided by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG).

The City will assume the responsibilities for GIS work, public notification, meeting schedules, website maintenance and public outreach.

Content Requirements

The City welcomes a response to the RFQ in any format that best expresses the qualifications of the respondent. In general, lengthy responses are discouraged. Proposals submitted in response to the RFP must include the following items:

A. Qualifications

Identify the individual who would be primarily responsible for directly leading the review. Describe the background and experience of the individual who will perform the services, including education (including name of institutions, degrees received, dates of graduation, professional licenses and certifications, and employment history). In addition, provide examples of General Plan updates prepared, with emphasis of work completed for jurisdictions in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties.

For each such project, provide:

- Copy of work product and/or detailed description of the services performed, the time period in which they were performed;
- The name and telephone number of at least one reference for each such project that can attest to the quality and effectiveness of the Respondent's work.

B. *Methodological Approach*

Briefly describe the methodology and organizational approach the Respondent would use to assist the City, including critical elements and special methodologies that would be used to ensure that City objectives are satisfied.

C. *Compensation Terms*

Final compensation terms will be negotiated with the selected consultant. Please provide billing rates as part of the proposal.

Selection Criteria and Process

The City will evaluate qualifications based upon these criteria:

- Responsiveness to the RFQ.
- Experience and demonstrated success of the Respondent in assisting municipalities with a General Plan Update process. Experience with projects in the Bay Area environs and in cities comparable to Albany will be given greater weight. As part of this process, client references may be contacted.
- Ability to communicate effectively about the subject matter.
- Compensation rates.
- Evidence of the Respondent's ability to provide deliverables in a cost effective and timely manner.
- Other extraordinary elements or creative approaches to assisting staff. This particular selection criterion is intended to allow the City to expressly consider creative aspects of statements of qualifications that do not necessarily fall into other selection criteria.

As a part of its evaluation, the City may request additional information or data from Respondents, and may request Respondents to make in-person presentations of their qualifications to a panel of City representatives.

To Submit Qualifications

Qualification submittals are due by 5:00 p.m., November 14, 2012 and must be sent to:

Anne Hersch, City Planner
City of Albany
1000 San Pablo Avenue
Albany, CA 94706
(510) 528-5765

Registration of Intent to Submit Qualifications

Interested parties are requested to contact Anne Hersch at ahersch@albanyca.org to register their intent to respond to the RFP. Registration ensures that any modification to the RFQ process can be transmitted as quickly as possible to all interested parties. A written confirmation of registration will be sent by email within two business days. If you do not receive a written confirmation, or have any questions regarding the RFQ, please contact Anne Hersch at 510-528-5765. It is the responsibility of the respondents, before submitting a response to the RFQ, to ascertain if the City has issued any notices, clarifications, addenda, or other communications to responders. Oral explanations or instructions from City staff shall not be considered binding on the City.

Format and Number of Copies

Respondent teams must submit three (3) copies of their qualifications plus one electronic pdf document. Submissions on 8½ by 11-inch paper or 8½ by 14-inch paper are preferred to simplify copying. The City reserves the right to make all submissions available to the public pursuant to legal requirements.

The City anticipates that the interview process will be held sometime during the week of November 26-30, 2012. The consultant will be selected shortly thereafter and the contract for services will be scheduled for City Council in December/January. The consultant will be expected to commence services immediately upon contract execution.

General Conditions

1. Any material clarifications or modifications to the RFP or the selection process will be made in writing and provided to all recipients of the RFP.
2. The City reserves the right to:
 - Waive minor irregularities.
 - Modify or cancel the selection process or schedule at any time.

- Negotiate with the second choice Respondent if it is unable to negotiate an acceptable contract with the first choice Respondent within a reasonable period of time.
 - Reject any and all proposals, and to seek new qualifications when it is in the best interest of the City to do so.
 - Seek any clarification or additional information from Respondents as is deemed necessary to the evaluation of a response.
 - Judge the veracity, substance, and relevance of the Respondents' written or oral representations, including seeking and evaluating independent information on any of the Respondents' worked cited as relevant experience.
 - Contract with separate entities for various components of the services.
3. All expenses related to any Respondent's response to the RFQ, or other expenses incurred during the period of time the selection process is underway, are the sole obligation and responsibility of that Respondent. The City will not, directly or indirectly, assume responsibility for such costs except as otherwise provided by written agreement.
4. The professional will be required to sign the City of Albany's standard Agreement for Consultant Services (ACS) and meet the City's Insurance Requirements (IR), a copy of the agreement and insurance requirements are available upon request. The contract for the performance of these services will provide that: (i) the consultant will perform its services at the direction of the City in a manner consistent with State law and City policies; and (ii) the consultant will be subject to the State law and the City's conflict of interest policies.