

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



**Consulting Services for California Environmental
Quality Act (CEQA) Analysis for the
Albany Neck and Bulb Transition
Study**

Issue Date: November 3, 2017

Deadline for Submissions:
Friday, December 8, 2017
5:00pm

The City of Albany is requesting qualifications from qualified firms or individuals to prepare an environmental review document for the Albany Neck & Bulb Transition Study. This document outlines the scope of work for consulting services. Electronic proposals will be accepted until Friday, December 8, 2017 5:00pm. Proposals shall be submitted to:

Claire Griffing
1000 San Pablo Avenue
Albany, CA 94706
cgriffing@albanyca.org
Attention: RFQ Albany Bulb CEQA

INTRODUCTION

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 bordered by the cities of El Cerrito and Richmond on the north, the City of Berkeley on the east and south side, and by unincorporated Kensington in Contra Costa County on the north and east. 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 of Albany was incorporated in 1908, and at the time of the 2010 census had a population of 18,539 residents. Albany is known for the excellent quality of its K-12 school district, highly educated populace, and small town ambience in an urban setting. Albany is a Charter City governed by five (5) Councilmembers, elected at large. The City Manager implements policy set by the City Council.

The Albany waterfront is located on the eastern edge of the San Francisco Bay and encompasses approximately 190 acres of land between Highway I-80 and the Bay, approximately 88 acres of which is publically owned. The publicly owned portion of the waterfront is owned by either the City of Albany, East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD), or the State of California (and managed by EBRPD).

Much of the waterfront was created gradually from 1963 to 1983 by a landfill operation that placed construction debris progressively further out into the Bay. Its terrain has been configured by vegetation growing over the fill. The waterfront looks out on the most prominent features of San Francisco Bay, including the Golden Gate Bridge, the skyline of the City of San Francisco, and the Marin Headlands. Because of the park's location and the fact that it provides wildness and isolation in such close proximity to an urban area, it is a regional draw for dog-walkers, artists, educators, hikers, bird watchers, cyclists, and other recreational users.

The Albany Plateau, Neck, and Bulb form the peninsula that extends westward from the Buchanan Street/I-80 interchange. The privately-owned Golden Gate Fields horse race track borders the park area to the south. The Plateau is a large, relatively level area at the east end of the peninsula and is currently owned by EBRPD. A large portion of the Plateau is maintained by the EBRPD as a potential habitat for the Burrowing Owl. The

Neck is a narrow isthmus that extends westward from the Plateau out to the Albany Bulb. The Bulb is a roughly oval-shaped area that comprises the westernmost portion of the peninsula. The Beach is a recent, natural development generated by the interplay of tidal action and the contour of the landfill.

The project site is comprised of the City owned portions of the waterfront; the 31 acre Bulb and 7 acres of the right-of-way connecting Buchanan Street to the Bulb, known as the Neck. Both the Neck and Bulb are characterized by steeper topography and denser vegetation than most other areas of the waterfront. The vegetation is designated as “ruderal scrub” (mostly non-native shrubs and grasses), and is dominated by coyote-brush. French broom and cotoneaster are also common, as are native grasses and wildflowers in varying densities. The trails have evolved over time, and in many places have uneven surfaces, protruding metal and construction debris, and are eroding. The entire peninsula shoreline is armored with concrete debris, with a particularly large concentration along the southern edge.

In 1992, state legislation (AB 754) was passed that directed EBRPD to acquire and develop an Eastshore State Park encompassing waterfront land in Oakland, Emeryville, Berkeley, Albany, and Richmond. The resulting McLaughlin Eastshore State Park was formally established in 2002.

McLaughlin Eastshore State Park is the result of decades of citizen efforts, starting in the 1960s, to stop garbage dumping in the Bay; to regulate commercial development on the shoreline; to preserve the waterfront for public use; and to create environmental benefit on the shoreline. The Eastshore State Park extends 8.5 miles from the foot of the Bay Bridge in Oakland, through Albany and neighboring cities, to the Marina Bay neighborhood in Richmond, and contains 260 acres of dry land and 2,002 acres of tidelands.

In 1995, the City of Albany submitted a proposal to the EBRPD that served as a statement of the city’s recommendations and guidance for the development of the Albany portion of the park project. The proposal is consistent with Albany’s 1992 General Plan, and calls for maximum feasible open space, recreation, and public access to the waterfront area in the context of a complementary mix of private and public uses. It also states that the parts of the Albany waterfront known as the Plateau, Beach, Neck, Bulb and Fleming Point for inclusion in the State Park. Furthermore, the 1995 proposal specifies that the Neck and Bulb should be preserved as a semi-wild area, reserved for hiking, enjoying the views, observing plants and animals, and providing opportunities for solitude.

Both the State Parks General Plan for Eastshore State Park and the Proposal for the Albany Portion of Eastshore State Park underscore the primary goal to provide an open, usable parkland area for the enjoyment of the community at large. The site is currently owned by the City of Albany and is open to the public for recreational use. East Bay Regional Parks serves as an agent of the State Parks system to manage adjoining areas of the waterfront.

The ultimate goal of this project is to make the site ready to create a seamless waterfront park. The City owned portion of the Albany waterfront has not yet been transitioned; however, due to concerns regarding uneven ground, protruding metal, unregulated art projects, construction debris, and homeless encampments. In preparation for transferring

City lands into the State Park, the City began enforcing the City's no camping regulations on the Bulb in 2013, and homeless encampments have been removed.

Through a grant from the California Coastal Commission, the City hired Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC (WRT) in November 2014 to develop a plan for improving the Albany Neck and Bulb to enable this area to become part of McLaughlin Eastshore State Park. After completing an initial community engagement process and a technical site analysis, WRT prepared the Albany Neck & Bulb Transition Study, which was approved by Council on June 6th, 2016. The plan was used to arrange a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with EBRPD, which was adopted by Council on November 4, 2016.

The EBRPD's Albany Beach project is nearing completion. The first phase of the project, completed in 2016, improved the south portion of the Neck. The planning and design process for the final phase of the project has been completed and the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) approved the project at their meeting on October 5, 2017. This final project will close a gap in the Bay Trail from Gilman Street (in Berkeley) to Buchanan Street, enhance and expand the beach, dunes and wetlands, and improve public access to District owned portions of the waterfront. In addition, the project includes interpretive exhibits, picnic facilities, restrooms, and additional vehicle and bicycle parking.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

The selected consultant will be responsible for completing the initial study checklist and preparation of documents demonstrating compliance with CEQA Guidelines and statutes for the attached Albany Neck & Bulb Transition Study. For purposes of responding to this RFQ, the respondents should assume that the final work product will be a mitigated negative declaration. (It should be noted, however, that the City has not predetermined the outcome of the environmental analysis and will exercise its independent judgment when making any final determination as to the appropriate environmental document and its contents.)

The submittal should include all of the technical studies, graphics, and analyses necessary to support the mitigated negative declaration. As appropriate, the lead consultant may assemble a "team" of specialized sub-consultants for this proposal. It is the City's desire for the lead firm to manage any technical firms that are subsequently retained. The consultant also should budget time to attend two public meetings and prepare technical memorandum in response to public comments.

The City will assume the responsibilities for public notification and outreach, printing, meeting scheduling, preparation of resolutions, and other administrative tasks related to this project. The City also will assume responsibility for coordinating review of administrative draft of the MND, including consolidating comments from City departments and legal counsel.

Cost

The City Council has appropriated no more than \$300,000 for this project. Once the preferred consultant is selected, we will work on developing a budget.

SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

- **Cover Letter**

The cover letter should briefly state the consultant's understanding of the work to be performed, the commitment to perform the work on a reasonable timeline, and why the consultant believes it is best qualified to perform the duties and tasks outlined and described in scope of work contained in this request.
- **Qualifications**
 - The proposal should include the following information and materials:
 - Qualifications and Related Experience of Personnel Who Will Perform Work. Résumés of all personnel who are proposed to provide professional services to the City of Albany within the Scope of Work outlined and described in this request should be included.
 - Prior Relevant Experience. A description of prior work experience and projects relevant to the Scope of Work outlined and described in this request should be included.
 - References of Local Government Clients. Please include a list of at least three local government clients located in California for which the consultant has rendered professional services relevant to the scope of work outlined and described in this request.
- **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.

SELECTION CRITERIA AND PROCESS

The City will evaluate proposals based upon the following criteria:

- Completeness of response to the RFQ
- Experience with similar projects and reference feedback
- Billing rates and fee proposal
- Evidence of the Respondent's ability to provide deliverables in a cost effective and timely manner

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.

Once the preferred consultant is selected, we will work on developing a scope of work, task schedule, and budget.

General Conditions

1. Any material clarifications or modifications to the RFQ or the selection process will be made in writing and provided to all recipients of the RFQ.
2. The City reserves the right to:
 - Waive minor irregularities.
 - Modify or cancel the selection process or schedule at any time.
 - Negotiate scope and cost with the consultant.
 - 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. The project team shall be approved by the City of Albany. The City must approve any changes in the project team.
4. 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.
5. 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.
6. All proposals submitted will be subject to public records laws.

SUBMISSIONS

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. Please submit your firm's qualifications, identify key staff to be assigned to this project, provide resumes for each key staff member; provide at least three (3) professional references for work that was performed similar to that requested in this RFQ, and provide a detailed description of your approach to the project and a time schedule. Responses are not to exceed the total fee amount.

The City reserves the right to make all submissions available to the public pursuant to legal requirements. The City anticipates that a consultant will be selected by mid-January, and that a contract for services will be negotiated and executed within a month thereafter. The consultant will be expected to commence services immediately upon contract execution.

Registration of Intent to Submit Qualifications

Interested parties are requested to contact Claire Griffing at cgriffing@albanyca.org to register their intent to respond to the RFQ. 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 Claire Griffing at (510) 528-5754.

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.

To Submit a Proposal

Electronic proposals will be accepted until Friday, December 8, 2017
5:00pm. Proposals shall be submitted to:

Claire Griffing
1000 San Pablo Avenue
Albany, CA 94706
cgriffing@albanyca.org
Attention: RFQ Albany Bulb CEQA