



MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 8, 2008

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Thomas Rogers, Associate Planner
Community Development Department

RE: **Agenda Item E2: Selection of Planning Commission
Representatives to the El Camino Real/Downtown Specific
Plan Consultant Review Committee**

On August 26, 2008, the City Council approved a process to procure consultant services for the El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan (Phase II). This project is intended to build on the work of the successful Vision Plan (Phase I). The staff report for this meeting, which includes background information and more detail on the Request for Proposal (RFP) process, is included as Attachment A. The RFP, with some changes made by the Council, was issued on August 28, 2008. Proposals are due on September 25, 2008.

As part of this action, the Council authorized the formation of a seven-person committee to review proposals, interview representatives of the respondent firms, and provide a recommendation to the Council. The review committee will be comprised of the following:

- City Council Member John Boyle
- City Council Member Rich Cline
- Two Planning Commissioners to be appointed by the Planning Commission
- Community Development Director Arlinda Heineck
- City Manager Glen Rojas
- Community Engagement Manager Cherise Brandell

Review committee members should be prepared to spend several hours during the end of September and beginning of October to review the proposals independently. In addition, review committee members should be able to attend consultant interviews during the first two weeks of October. The interviews would

ideally be grouped together on one day, although scheduling constraints could result in them being broken up into multiple sessions. The last interview would be followed by a discussion and evaluation session intended to generate a single recommendation for the Council's consideration. The Council is tentatively scheduled to review this recommendation at its meeting of October 28, 2008.

The Commission should solicit volunteers for the review committee. If more than two Commissioners volunteer, the full Commission should vote to select the two representatives. Commissioners Bressler and Riggs served on a similar consultant review committee for Phase I, and also served with Commissioner Ferrick (who was not on the Planning Commission at the time) on the El Camino Real/Downtown Visioning Process Oversight and Outreach Committee. However, the Commission may select any Commissioners as the two representatives to the current consultant review committee.

During the Specific Plan process itself, there may be an opportunity for one or more Planning Commissioners to serve on a working group or similar committee. However, the exact structure of the Specific Plan process is still to be determined, pending receipt and review of the project proposals. Any Planning Commission representatives on a working group or similar committee would be selected at a future date.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. City Council Staff Report, dated August 26, 2008

EXHIBITS TO BE PROVIDED AT MEETING

None

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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Council Meeting Date: August 26, 2008
Staff Report #: 08-119

Agenda Item #: F1

REGULAR BUSINESS: Review and Approval of Draft Request for Proposal (RFP) for Consultant Services for the El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council review and approve the Draft RFP (Request for Proposal) for the El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan (Attachment A).

BACKGROUND

On July 15, 2008, the City Council unanimously accepted the El Camino Real/Downtown Vision Plan (including direction for several relatively minor edits) and approved a recommendation for a Phase II scoping and consultant procurement process. As noted in the July 15 staff report, Phase II will use as its base the preparation of a Specific Plan. Under California law, cities and counties may prepare Specific Plans to develop policies, programs and regulations to implement the jurisdiction's adopted General Plan. A Specific Plan can provide greater detail on a range of issues, from the adoption of broad policies to be considered when reviewing new development in a certain area to detailed land use regulations, development standards, design guidance and financing mechanisms. The Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) has prepared The Planner's Guide to Specific Plans, which is available at the following location:

<http://ceres.ca.gov/planning/specific/>

On August 14, 2008, the El Camino Real/Downtown Visioning Process Oversight and Outreach Committee met in a public meeting to review an earlier draft RFP. Committee Members and members of the public provided comments on the draft, which have been used to prepare the current draft RFP. Staff has also met with the Council Subcommittee to review and discuss the draft RFP, and their comments have been incorporated into the current draft as well.

ANALYSIS

The Draft Request for Proposals (RFP) is included as Attachment A. The City Council and the public should review and provide comments on the draft RFP. The Council and the public may wish to use the Phase I experience to help inform this review exercise (for example, by focusing on tasks/practices that may or may not have worked well previously), although all elements of the draft may be discussed.

If the Council approves the draft (potentially with edits), the remainder of the process would follow this general timeline:

RFP Issuance	Late August 2008
Deadline for Proposals	Late September 2008
Consultant Interviews and Review Committee Recommendation	Early October 2008
City Council Discussion and Consultant Selection	Late October 2008
Start of Preliminary Consultant Work	Late October 2008

The objective of the draft RFP review process is not to finalize every detail about the Phase II process, but rather to set up clear goals and an overall structure, within which consultants may provide best practice recommendations. For example, the precise role of a working group has been left open-ended in the RFP, allowing consulting firms to recommend whether such a body has jurisdiction over process or content, along with the basis for that recommendation.

As noted in the draft RFP, a Consultant Review Committee will be formed and charged with reviewing the proposals and interviewing all firms that have submitted qualified proposals. The consultant interviews will be public meetings at which public comment will be welcomed, and copies of the proposals will be made available to interested members of the public. The Committee's recommendation will next be presented to the City Council for review and approval. Both the review committee and full Council will have the ability to direct that staff negotiate specific modifications to a preferred proposal in consultation with the consultant. The overall consultant procurement process would follow the model of Phase I.

IMPACT ON CITY RESOURCES

The Vision Plan (Phase I) has required both staff resources dedicated to the project as well as a General Fund reserve appropriations of \$176,500 for consultant services and \$50,000 related City costs (initial outreach, speaker series, printing and mailing of the project newsletters, meeting documents and refreshments, and contingencies). Consultant services for the Specific Plan (Phase II) would require a new General Fund reserve appropriation at a future City Council meeting.

POLICY ISSUES

The El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan would result in policy clarifications or changes related to land use and transportation issues.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The Vision Plan (Phase I) is a planning study and as such is not considered a project requiring environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Specific Plan (Phase II) would require environmental review, which is anticipated to take the form of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

Thomas Rogers
Associate Planner
Report Author

Arlinda Heineck
Community Development Director

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notification was achieved by posting the agenda, with this agenda item being listed, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting. In addition, the City has prepared a project page for the proposal, which is available at the following address:
http://www.menlopark.org/projects/comdev_eocrdowntown.htm. This page provides up-to-date information about the project, allowing interested parties to stay informed of its progress. The page allows users to sign up for automatic email bulletins, notifying them when content is updated or meetings are scheduled.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Draft Request for Proposal (RFP) for El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan (*RFP attachments not included*)



DRAFT Request for Proposal (RFP) for El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan

Issued: August __, 2008

Proposals Due: September __, 2008

Section 1: Background

About Menlo Park

The City of Menlo Park is a general law city located on “The Peninsula”, between San Francisco and Oakland on the north and San Jose on the south. The City enjoys easy access from both US-101 and Interstate 280, as well as a direct connection to the East Bay via the Dumbarton Bridge. The City borders the communities of Atherton, Redwood City, Woodside, East Palo Alto, and Palo Alto, as well as unincorporated San Mateo County lands. In addition, the City is adjacent to Stanford University, along the City’s southeastern border. As estimated by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) in *Projections 2007*, the City in 2005 was home to a total of 30,700 residents and 25,880 jobs. The City’s residential neighborhoods are complemented by a number of active commercial areas, most notably the El Camino Real and Sand Hill Road corridors, the central downtown district along Santa Cruz Avenue, and the M-2 industrial district near Bayfront Expressway and US-101.

Project History

*Please note: detailed information and materials are available on the project web page:
http://www.menlopark.org/projects/comdev_ecrdowntown.htm*

At the City Council workshop on January 6, 2007, the Council identified a goal to set a clear long-term plan for the El Camino Real and Downtown areas. The study area and existing zoning districts are shown in the attached maps. To achieve this goal, the Council agreed that a broad and inclusive community visioning process (Phase I) was needed prior to creation of a Specific Plan, Zoning Ordinance Amendment, or equivalent implementation strategy (Phase II). The two-phase structure was intended to allow for a full range of outcomes, including the potential for only limited changes to the existing regulations, as well as to allow for the potential use of a different consulting firm in Phase II, if different skill sets for different types of work were required.

From the latter part of 2007 through July 2008, the City and the consulting firm of Design, Community & Environment (DCE) guided the community visioning phase. The visioning process consisted of extensive public outreach and participation, including events such as walking tours, educational forums, and community workshops. An 18-person advisory body,

the El Camino Real/Downtown Visioning Process Oversight and Outreach Committee, provided input on the process and reached out to encourage participation by the broader community, supplementing other publicity sources such as a regular citywide newsletter and email updates.

After Planning Commission and preliminary City Council review, the City Council formally accepted the Vision Plan on July 15, 2008 and approved a scoping and consultant procurement process for Phase II. The final Vision Plan is attached and is also available at the following location:

http://www.menlopark.org/departments/pln/ecr-d/ecr-d_vision-plan_final.pdf

At the core of the Vision Plan are the 12 goals meant to serve as guiding principles as the City moves forward with a detailed plan:

1. Maintain a village character unique to Menlo Park.
2. Provide greater east-west, town-wide connectivity.
3. Improve circulation and streetscape conditions on El Camino Real.
4. Ensure that El Camino Real development is sensitive to and compatible with adjacent neighborhoods.
5. Revitalize underutilized parcels and buildings.
6. Activate the train station area.
7. Protect and enhance pedestrian amenities on Santa Cruz Avenue.
8. Expand shopping, dining and neighborhood services to ensure a vibrant downtown.
9. Provide residential opportunities in the Vision Plan Area.
10. Provide plaza and park spaces.
11. Provide an integrated, safe and well-designed pedestrian and bicycle network.
12. Develop parking strategies and facilities that meet the commercial and residential needs of the community.

The 12 goals are complemented by objectives that add context and detail, as well as by a conceptual illustrative diagram and artistic perspective renderings. These elements are intended to reflect community comment and to provide a foundation and starting point for Phase II. The objectives may potentially be modified as long as the changes are in the spirit of the accepted goal statements.

Phase II Objectives

While the accepted Vision Plan has established the 12 broad and inspirational goals, the Phase II Specific Plan process will answer detailed questions, such as:

- What are the impacts? For example, what would be the traffic impacts of new development?
- What are the benefits? For example, how would tax revenue be affected by different land uses?
- Are the proposed vision plan elements financially feasible? For example, how would potential public improvements such as a new parking garage be funded? Similarly, how

feasible would private development be, given factors such as land values?

- What are the appropriate trade-offs between “upzoning” and public benefits?
- How should the City work with external entities such as Caltrans and Caltrain to implement the vision plan?
- What will new buildings generally look like?

The answers to these and related questions will provide the context and background needed in order to make actual regulatory and policy changes to implement the 12 goals. The Phase II process will meet the high standard of public outreach and participation set by Phase I. The process will continue to engage a wide range of community members, including those who may not currently be involved in civic activities. In addition, the Community Engagement Model currently being developed by the City will be incorporated into the public input process. **[Note: the Community Engagement Model is currently in administrative draft form but a public draft will be ready with the RFP]** In order to allow the consultant an opportunity to help shape the community engagement process, the scope of work below provides general objectives along with certain key specific tasks.

The final product will be an adopted Specific Plan and related General Plan and Zoning Ordinance amendments, and an approved Environmental Impact Report (EIR). These final products will be informed by detailed impact/benefit analysis, and will be the result of continued community involvement and participation. The consultant should strive to build trust with the community, and should set up the Specific Plan process to ensure that all work products, including intermediate summaries/reports, accurately represent the community opinion. Key dissenting/alternate opinions should be noted, along with the basis for why they were not included in a final recommendation.

Section 2: Scope of Work

Ongoing Tasks

The following tasks should be incorporated into all of the individual phases, as needed.

- *Working Group*: A task force of residents, elected/appointed officials, staff, and other stakeholders to regularly review the progress of the project and provide input to the consultant and staff within a public forum, as well as to provide outreach to the broader community. Please state clearly whether the recommendation is a body that would have jurisdiction over process or content, along with the basis for that recommendation.
- *Project Web Site*: Expand or supplement the existing project page to provide all relevant information about the project, including: staff reports, presentations, meeting materials, project schedule, and related documents.
- *Newsletter*: Regular print and electronic newsletters to inform the community of the progress of the project. Printing/mailing may be handled directly by the City.
- *City Council Outreach*: Regular individual or group meetings with the City Council to review the progress of the project and to provide input.
- *Planning Commission Outreach*: Regular individual or group meetings with the Planning Commission to review the progress of the project and to provide input.
- *Discussion and Coordination with Stanford University*: Several key vacant/underutilized

parcels along the southern portion of El Camino Real are owned by Stanford University (some of the parcels are encumbered by long-term ground leases). The process should continue to engage Stanford University in the overall planning project.

Task 1: Project Start-Up

Conduct preliminary administrative tasks, such as review of the Vision Plan, General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, Community Engagement Model, Comprehensive Bicycle Plan, parking studies, and other background materials. Meet with staff to discuss issues such as the project goals, opportunities and constraints, information needs, roles and responsibilities, and expectations. Develop final project work plan and schedule, and discuss facilities needs and other logistical issues.

Task 2: Vision Refinement

This task shall include community outreach through the Ongoing Tasks and additional activities such as:

- *Community Workshops*: Interactive public events that help community members reach common ground on key issues;
- *Daytime Outreach*: Supplements to the community workshops that reach groups (such as seniors and parents of young children) that may have difficulty making evening events. Daytime Outreach activities may take place in districts other than the Downtown and El Camino Real area;
- *Stakeholder Interviews*: Interviews with key stakeholders, such as: residents, business and property owners, architects, developers, community activists, and public officials;
- *Survey*: A mail, internet, phone, and/or intercept survey to help establish community opinion and/or identify areas for further discussion; and
- *Other Activities*: The consultant should include other activities that would provide the opportunity for an informed and meaningful community dialog.

Develop a range of detailed scenarios that would implement the general goals of the Vision Plan. Scenarios would include variations on elements such as building sizes and forms, as well as different kinds of land uses. Conduct preliminary analysis of the scenarios with regard to metrics such as the following:

- Environmental impacts, such as traffic and transportation;
- Fiscal impacts, such as revenue from various types/intensities of new development and costs to provide services, as well as analysis of possible financial assistance or public/private partnerships that might be required for implementation;
- Market feasibility, exploring the market demand for specific land uses; and
- Relationship between development incentives/density bonuses and public benefits.

Conduct community outreach to review and discuss the results of the preliminary analysis. The review and discussion of the scenarios shall be informed by objective analysis and clear visuals. Consider incorporating tools that allow for variations to be developed and visualized during meetings (such as live 3D computer programs or 'block' exercises that visually relay

site layout and building massing options).

Based on the results of the community outreach, refine the scenarios and conduct additional preliminary analysis as needed. Through community outreach, develop preferred scenario for detailed analysis in next stage. Multiple revisions and analysis may be needed to reach preferred scenario. The preliminary scenarios may focus on certain geographic and/or topic areas, if this would benefit the vision refinement process, although the preferred scenario should represent a comprehensive plan.

Task 3: Development of Draft Specific Plan, Fiscal Impact Analysis, and Draft Environmental Review

Develop a Draft Specific Plan for the preferred scenario including, at a minimum, the following elements:

1. Goals
2. Description of Planning Process
3. Land Use
4. Transportation and Circulation
5. Parking
6. Design Guidelines
7. Study of Development Incentives/Density Bonuses for Public Benefits
8. Detailed Market Study
9. Infrastructure Plan
10. Implementation Measures

Following preparation of the Draft Specific Plan, prepare a Fiscal Impact Analysis to assess the projected revenues to the City and other agencies derived from the project and the costs for providing services to the project over a 20-year period in a net annual and on a cumulative basis. Additionally, the Fiscal Impact Analysis will establish a baseline of current revenue generation from the project area and evaluate the potential impacts of the proposal on that revenue generation. Simultaneous with the preparation of the Fiscal Impact Analysis, prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Report to assess the environmental impacts of the Draft Specific Plan.

Task 4: Development and Adoption of the Final Specific Plan, Related General Plan and Zoning Ordinance Amendments, and Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR)

Conduct community outreach (following the model of some or all of Task 2 activities) following the preparation of the Draft Specific Plan, Fiscal Impact Analysis and Draft Environmental Impact Report. Based on the results of the community outreach, prepare the Final Specific Plan, related General Plan and Zoning Ordinance amendments and Final Environmental Impact Report. Prepare for and hold one Planning Commission hearing and two City Council hearings to review and take the necessary approval actions.

Section 3: Proposal Content

Cover Letter

Please begin with a letter introducing your firm and summarizing your general qualifications and an executive summary of your specific approach to completing the requested visioning process. This section should indicate the length of time for which the proposal is effective (minimum of 60 days).

Work Program

Please provide a detailed plan for the services to be provided. Identify any tasks that City staff are expected to complete.

Schedule

The proposal shall include a preliminary project schedule that identifies milestones and completion dates by task from the beginning through formal review and adoption of the Specific Plan by the City Council. Initial project work should commence in October 2008.

Budget and Fees

The consultant should provide a fee estimate, on a task-by-task basis. The proposal shall include a spreadsheet identifying personnel, hourly rates, project responsibilities, and estimated amount of time expected for each task, expressed in person-hours. The proposed budget is to be presented as not-to-exceed, with all overhead/expenses included in the figure. The consultant should outline the terms of payment, based on monthly billings to the City.

Key Personnel

Names of key personnel, their respective titles, experience, and periods of service with the firm. Please clearly identify the primary contact for the proposal. If sub-consultants will be used, include details for these team members in this section.

Availability

A brief statement of the availability of key personnel of the firm to undertake the proposed project.

Project list

List of related projects completed by the firm, along with relevant background information (*maximum of 10 examples*). For projects that were completed by a team of consultants, please clarify the specific contribution of your firm.

References

Names and telephone numbers of persons whom the agency can call for references regarding the firm's past performance, preferably on similar projects.

Section 4: Selection Process

Please submit eight (8) bound copies, one (1) unbound, single-sided copy on standard-weight paper (no heavy-weight paper or tabbed dividers), and one (1) CD-R including a PDF copy of your proposal at your earliest convenience, but no later than **September __, 2008** at 5 p.m. to:

Thomas Rogers, Associate Planner
Community Development Department
City of Menlo Park
701 Laurel Street
Menlo Park, CA 94025

Proposals will be reviewed by a six-person committee comprised of the following:

- City Council Member John Boyle
- City Council Member Richard Cline
- Two Planning Commissioners to be appointed by the Planning Commission
- Community Development Director Arlinda Heineck
- City Manager Glen Rojas
- Community Engagement Manager Cherise Brandell

The review committee will conduct interviews during the first two weeks of October 2008 with the intent of providing a single recommendation for the review and approval of the full City Council at a public meeting on October __, 2008. The consultant interviews will be public meetings at which public comment will be permitted, and copies of the proposals will be made available to interested members of the public.

Section 5: Attachments

- [El Camino Real/Downtown Vision Plan](#)
- [El Camino Real/Downtown Study Area](#)
- [Zoning Map and General Plan Land Use Diagram – Sheet 3](#)
- Draft Community Engagement Model [*Note: draft not complete, but will be ready for RFP issuance*]

If you have any questions during the preparation of your proposal, please contact Thomas Rogers, Associate Planner, by phone at (650) 330-6722 or by email at throgers@menlopark.org.

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