Planning and Building Department
COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

Request for Proposals

RFP No. PLN2023-03

Environmental Impact Report

for the

McKinleyville Town Center Project

Humboldt County, California

Released/Issued: August 24, 2023

Closing/Proposals Due: September 25, 2023

(Must be received by 5:00 p.m.)

Humboldt County Department of Planning & Building
3015 H Street
Eureka, California 95501

COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
CONSULTANT SERVICES TO PREPARE AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE MCKINLEYVILLE TOWN CENTER PROJECT

Release Date: August 24, 2023
Closing Date: September 25, 2023
RFP Number: PLN2023-03

CONTACT PERSON: Suzanne Lippre
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Planning & Building Department
County of Humboldt
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Proposals to be received by 5:00 p.m. on September 25, 2023, at the address listed above.

I. INTRODUCTION

The County of Humboldt ("County") is soliciting proposals from qualified contractors to prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) in accordance with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines for the next phase of the McKinleyville Town Center project. The EIR will be used for adoption of a Zoning Ordinance guiding development in the area, and a modification to the McKinleyville Community Plan and will be in sufficient detail to address future development of the Town Center. The McKinleyville Town Center Q-Zone envisions a unique community core characterized by development emphasizing pedestrian connectivity, public meeting and gathering spaces, open space and wetland preservation with a full range of mixed-use commercial, office, civic and high-density residential uses. The EIR will review the proposed zoning ordinances and land use changes (attached at Exhibit 2) for approximately 134 acres of land across 45 parcels that will be utilized as the Town Center. The project area is located along two main thoroughfares, Hiller Road and Central Avenue. The topics of primary concern include aesthetics, land use, transportation, biological resources, and hydrology. The EIR will evaluate the proposed change in wetland definition of the McKinleyville Community Plan from a single parameter to three parameters within the Town Center Area and will evaluate the potential for a reconfiguration of Central Avenue to slow traffic and provide better bicycle and pedestrian connectivity.

A professional services agreement in substantially the same format as Exhibit 1, attached hereto, will be executed with the successful individual(s) or firm(s). Any objections to the terms and conditions not made prior to or with submission of the proposal will be considered waived.

The County requests that interested companies and individuals review the attached materials and submit proposals according to Section III below.

II. SCOPE OF WORK

The County's objective in this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to obtain qualified contractors that can provide professional environmental assessment and planning services

under the direction of the Humboldt County Planning and Building Department to perform all activities necessary for the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

The scope of work will include the following:

Scope of Work – EIR for the McKinleyville Town Center Project

The amount of area and the number of parcels that will be altered will result in a substantial increase in development potential. One or more factors analyzed for CEQA compliance may be determined to have a significant effect which cannot be fully mitigated, and an Environmental Impact Report will be required. Development projects have not been proposed at this time. The EIR should provide the analysis necessary to forgo technical studies characterizing potential effects for individual project proposals in the proposed Town Center.

The general approach and techniques for specific work includes:

Notice of Preparation

Using the current version of the Environmental Checklist in the State CEQA Guidelines, CONSULTANT will prepare the Notice of Preparation. County Staff will circulate the Notice of Preparation to the State Clearinghouse, Responsible Agencies and other interested organizations and individuals. One (1) scoping meeting will be conducted at a County provided facility following circulation of the Initial Study/Notice of Preparation.

Administrative Draft EIR

Table of Contents

CONSULTANT will prepare a Table of Contents.

Summary

CONSULTANT will prepare a brief summary of the proposed actions and their consequences, not to exceed 15 pages. The summary shall identify each significant effect with proposed mitigation measures and alternatives, areas of controversy raised by agencies and the public, and issues to be resolved including the choice among alternatives and mitigation of significant effects.

Project Description

CEQA Case law requires an accurate, stable, finite project description as an essential element of an EIR. CONSULTANT will describe the proposed rezoning using the project description provided by the Planning and Building Department in accordance with Section 15124 of the CEQA Guidelines. The EIR will identify each parcel proposed for rezoning on a detailed map, including their size, location, and developable area. The project description shall include a general description of the project's technical, economic, and environmental characteristics and outline any supporting public facilities. The project description must also include the underlying purpose of the project, discuss project benefits, and identify the following:

- Objectives of the Project
- Site History

- Project History
- The Intended Uses of the EIR Including:
    - List of Agencies Expected to use the EIR
    - List of Permits and other Approvals
    - List of Environmental Review and Consultation Requirements
    - List of all Decisions Subject to CEQA

Project Setting

CONSULTANT will describe the physical environmental conditions in the vicinity of the project. This section is expected to discuss area-wide settings as well as a brief discussion of the specific area surrounding each affected parcel. This section will include maps and other exhibits, as well as a narrative description of the project area and its surroundings. A baseline physical condition should be determined and be no longer than is necessary to provide an understanding of the significant effects of the proposed project and its alternatives. If applicable, the EIR should discuss any inconsistencies between the proposed project and the County General Plan and McKinleyville Community Plan.

Environmental Impact Evaluation

CONSULTANT will conduct an evaluation of impacts utilizing the baseline physical conditions for a threshold of significance for each topic. The significance of project-related impacts will then be determined for the project area. In assessing the impact of the proposed project on the environment the examination should be limited to changes in the affected area as they exist at the time of the Notice of Preparation being published. Direct and indirect significant effects of the project on the environment shall be clearly identified and described, giving due consideration to both the short-term and long-term effects. Except where impacts are expected to be acute and site specific, specific environmental topical areas to be addressed will include the following:

- Aesthetics
  This section will address the project's potential to substantially impair the visible character of the project area's scenic resources. The EIR will include a discussion of proximity to scenic roadways and scenic vistas, existing lighting standards, and recommendations for mitigating any potentially significant impacts.

- Agriculture and Forest Resources
  Agriculture and timber production uses will be assessed for the project area and parcels which are expected to convert to non-agricultural uses will be identified. An analysis of the agricultural suitability of the soil types on the subject site will be prepared.

- Air Quality
  The proposed project will be analyzed using the North Coast Unified Air Quality Management District (NCAQMD) air quality standards. URBan EMISsions air quality modeling software (or an authorized equivalent) will be used to estimate the quantity of criteria pollutants expected to be generated by the project both in construction and in operations, including the impacts of automobiles traveling to and from the affected sites.

- Biological Resources
  Existing information sources, including currently mapped streamside management / wetland areas, and the Natural Diversity Data Base (NDDB) will be used to determine whether biological resources on or adjacent to any of the affected parcels are likely to be impacted. The EIR will need to evaluate any potential habitat for listed species, identify impacts and possible mitigation. The project proposes to use a 3-parameter wetland delineation within the town center. This will require analysis of the potential impacts to wetlands in changing the delineation criteria from a single parameter to three parameters. Wetland surveys are being completed and will be available for the EIR Consultant to use in the analysis in the change in wetland definitions and in the actual impacts. The project proposes to set aside land for wetland conservation and recreation. The Town Center Ordinance also includes criteria for wetland mitigation.

- Cultural Resources
  Information regarding historical resources in the project area must be reviewed and adequate mitigation measures should be proposed to preserve such resources. This includes historical structures, archaeological resources, human remains, etc.

- Energy
  Description of potential impacts due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation and potential conflict with state or local plans for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

- Geology and Soils
  Existing information sources, including Alquist-Priolo Maps, soil surveys and similar data to address likely impacts related to soils, geologic hazards, seismic safety, and structural hazards shall be utilized. No fieldwork, technical or engineering analysis is anticipated, however, mitigation measures requiring such analysis prior to development may be appropriate for particular areas, depending upon the soil types shown to be present.

- Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change
  An URBEMIS analysis shall be conducted to quantify the likely contribution of Carbon Dioxide and other greenhouse gases to the extent they can be determined. The primary sources of greenhouse gas emissions expected to be identified in conjunction with the project are construction impacts (short-term) and the transportation related impacts (long-term). Where proposed rezoning is likely to reduce overall vehicle trip length through support of a more land-efficient urban use, the potential beneficial effects of the project on greenhouse gas emissions will also be discussed.

- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
  Identification of affected parcels on the State of California's lists of known locations of hazardous materials generators will need to be determined. It will be necessary to identify any significant hazards to the public or environment due to hazardous materials or foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving hazardous materials. Impairment of any adopted emergency response plans or evacuation plans must be determined.

- Hydrology and Water Quality
  Issues associated with hydrology, water supply and water quality, of both surface and ground water must be analyzed. Flooding and drainage issues need to be addressed in this section to determine if proposed development will substantially alter existing drainage patterns. Identification of areas that may result in substantial erosion or increased surface runoff that would result in flooding on or off site need to be identified. The McKinleyville Community Plan includes drainage criteria.

- Land Use and Planning
  Environmental impacts due to conflicts with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect must be analyzed.

- Mineral Resources
  Information on mineral resources will be referenced and supplemented as necessary.

- Noise
  Using existing information such as community plans, the technical studies prepared by Humboldt County in support of the General Plan Update and noise contours for major transportation facilities prepared by other agencies, the potential for noise impacts to limit the development potential or to require sound mitigation strategies during construction must be determined. Construction noise will also be addressed. Existing policies regarding construction and development in noise impacted areas will be addressed.

- Population and Housing
  Population and housing effects will be described in the context of the Regional Housing Needs Assessment and the policies of the adopted Housing Element. An estimate will be prepared of the number of residents expected to be accommodated within the project area, upon full buildout.

- Public Services
  Using the technical reports prepared for the General Plan Update, a brief analysis of the capability of each affected community service provider to serve higher density residential uses as proposed needs to be prepared.

- Recreation
  Community recreation facilities likely to be affected need to be identified and a description of potential effects of a higher intensity use of those facilities must be provided. If the recreation facilities currently available do not meet the demand of the proposed project, information regarding expansion or construction of recreational facilities should be provided.

- Transportation
  An analysis of the transportation impacts associated with developing the site with a higher density mixed use is needed. The Town Center plan is contemplating the potential of no minimum parking requirement with a higher reliance on public transit, pedestrian and bicycle modes of transportation. The analysis also needs to evaluate the impacts (either as the primary project or project alternative) of reducing the

number of lanes upon the major north south arterial through McKinleyville (Central Avenue.) The community is concerned about the amount of delay and redistributed traffic this will create. This needs to be modeled. The newest traffic counts for Central Avenue are from 2012.

- Tribal Cultural Resources
  General information on cultural resources, historical sites and landmarks will be compiled and reported in this section. No fieldwork is anticipated. County Staff will provide a consultation request to the tribes with ancestral territory over the provide area consistent with AB52 protocol. (County will conduct the AB52 consultation.)

- Utilities and Service Systems
  Using the technical reports prepared for the General Plan Update, and in consultation with utility providers, a brief analysis of the capability of local utility systems to serve higher density residential uses as proposed needs to be completed. The project needs to be evaluated to determine if it requires any construction or expansion of utilities or service systems to adequately support the proposed development. Any hurdles that may pose a barrier to meeting the needs of the proposed development should be addressed.

- Wildfire
  An analysis of the impacts on fire safety and fire hazards from the proposed higher density residential uses including impacts on emergency response plans or emergency evacuation plans, exacerbate wildfire risks, installation of infrastructure that may increase fire risk, and/or expose people or structures to significant risks needs to be provided.

- Mandatory Findings of Significance
  A summary of the project's potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment and sensitive habitat areas must be prepared. The summary should include impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable in relation to past projects, other current projects, and of probable future projects. Any environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on humans directly or indirectly shall be included.

Significant Environmental Effects
CONSULTANT will identify and describe the direct and indirect effects of the project on the environment, giving due consideration to both the short- and long-term effects. The discussion should include relevant specifics of the area, the resources involved, physical changes, alterations to ecological systems, and changes induced in population distribution, population concentration, and the human use of the land.

Environmental Effects Which Cannot be Avoided
CONSULTANT will describe any significant impacts, including those which can be mitigated but not reduced to a level of insignificance. Impacts that cannot be alleviated with an alternative shall include their implications and the reasons why the project is being proposed.

Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes
CONSULTANT will describe any uses of nonrenewable resources during the initial and continued phases of the project which may be irreversible.

Growth-Inducing Impacts
CONSULTANT will discuss the ways in which the proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, whether directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. The discussion should include any removal of obstacles to population growth, impacts of existing community service facilities, and individual or cumulative impacts on the environment due to other activities as a result of the project.

Mitigation Measures
CONSULTANT will describe feasible measures which could minimize significant adverse impacts. The proposed mitigation measures must be fully enforceable through permit conditions, agreements, or other legally binding instruments. Mitigation measures must have an essential connection between the mitigation measure and a legitimate governmental interest, and must be "roughly proportional" to the impacts of the project. Mitigation measures impacting historical resources or greenhouse gas emissions must be compliant with Section 15126.4 of the CEQA guidelines.

Project Alternatives
CONSULTANT will provide an analysis of a reasonable range of alternatives to the preferred project that would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the preferred project. CONSULTANT proposes to evaluate alternatives, developed in close cooperation with the County of Humboldt. The alternatives will include a road diet on Central Avenue not being included, maintaining one parameter wetlands, and a reduced scale alternative that would limit development to two story buildings. A No Project alternative, which will assume that the proposed project will not be rezoned, must be addressed.

The EIR must identify the environmentally superior alternative and, if that is the no-project alternative, the environmentally superior alternative among the remaining alternatives.

Cumulative Impacts
CONSULTANT will address cumulative effects using the "full build out" method in which impacts are considered in the context of the anticipated development over their current planning period. Any reasonable, feasible options for mitigating or avoiding the project's contribution to any significant cumulative effects will be identified.

Effects Not Found to be Significant
CONSULTANT will prepare a brief statement in this section explaining why possible significant effects were determined not to be significant and were therefore not discussed in detail.

References and Bibliography
CONSULTANT will compile a bibliography of technical documents and published literature consulted during the preparation of the EIR. Lists of all federal, state, and local agencies; other organizations and private individuals consulted during preparation of the EIR; and the list of persons who prepared the EIR, will be presented.

Submit ADEIR for Review
CONSULTANT will provide electronic copies of Administrative Draft EIR for in-house review and comment by staff.

Circulate Draft EIR
CONSULTANT will revise the ADEIR as necessary to reflect County of Humboldt comments. The resulting Draft EIR will be published and circulated for agency and public review according to provisions of the CEQA Guidelines. COUNTY anticipates that one public comment meeting will be scheduled during the review period of the Draft EIR.

Responses to Comments and Final EIR
Pursuant to Section 15088 of the CEQA Guidelines, the Final EIR must respond in writing to each oral and written comment of the DEIR made by individuals, agencies, and organizations that review it. CONSULTANT will provide initial responses to comments at the end of the EIR circulation period for review by County Staff.

Comments and responses to comments, along with any amendments or alterations to the Draft EIR made in response to those comments and the list of commenting agencies, organizations, and individuals will be published as a separate volume of the EIR which, when combined with the DEIR will constitute the Final EIR (FEIR).

ATTENDANCE AT PUBLIC HEARINGS
CONSULTANT activities expected to be included in this Task include, but are not limited to, the following:

1) Prepare display maps, power point presentations and presentation materials
2) Participate in review and preparation meetings with County Staff
3) Attend one or more Public Hearings at Planning Commission
4) Attend one or more Public Hearings at the Board of Supervisors
5) Prepare written responses to comments raised at hearings by members of the public, Commissioners or Board members.

An initial budget will be established for this task, to be expended only as needed to complete on-call tasks as assigned.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT
CONSULTANT may conduct meetings by phone, zoom or in person with County Staff. The purpose of the meetings will be to coordinate data deliveries, provide project updates, review methodologies and provide preliminary feedback regarding the likely effect of the ongoing analysis on the recommended Housing Inventory. The project

management task also includes assignment and coordination of work effort, and schedule and budget maintenance

III. PROPOSAL FORMAT

A. **Cover letter:** Describe your business and summarize your qualifications and experience with preparing Environmental Impact Reports in accordance with CEQA guidelines.

B. **Authorized signature**: The cover letter attached to the submittal shall be signed by an authorized employee to receive consideration (Attachment A).

C. **Company experience:** Describe the experience your company has delivering the described scope of work.

D. **References**: Provide three professional references with contact information and description of services rendered. Proposers may use the reference data sheet (Attachment B) or present the information in their own format.

E. **Staff experience**: Provide resumés of the key staff that would be assigned to this job.

F. **Rates**: Provide the fee schedule for EIR preparation services and/or Provide hourly billing rates for key personnel and standard billing rates to be applied in performance of the work.

G. **Timeline**: Identify date of availability to commence work, describe general availability for as needed work.

H. **Insurance requirements**: Contractor will provide insurance evidence as specified in Section IX of the Professional Services Agreement.

I. **Sealed envelope/PDF**: All responses shall be submitted in a sealed envelope or single PDF via email, which is clearly marked with "RFP PLN2023-03", prior to the closing date and time.

J. **Late submittals**: Late submittals will not be accepted.

K. **Property of County**: All proposals, whether the submitting company is selected to perform the services or not, become the property of the County.

L. **Cost of RFP preparation**: Cost of preparation of submittal shall be borne by the proposer.

IV. SELECTION CRITERIA AND PROCESS

The County uses the competitive negotiation process, wherein the experience of each proposer is evaluated as it relates to the Scope of Work. Humboldt County Planning and Building Department staff will review the submittals and select a vendor or vendors to perform the work based on the following selection criteria:

A. General company and individual experience

B. Capacity to perform the scope of work

C. Cost to perform the scope of work

D. Possession of licenses and insurance certificates to perform the work

E. Ability to complete the task in a timely manner

F. Ability to work cooperatively with County staff

TIMELINE	DATES
RELEASE OF REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL	August 24, 2023
DEADLINE FOR PROPOSALS TO BE RECEIVED	September 25, 2023
	THE FOLLOWING DATES ARE TENTATIVE AND MAY BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE:
RFP EVALUATION PROCESS	September 26-October 6, 2023
CONTRACT FINALIZATION	October 27, 2023
NEW CONTRACT START DATE	Upon execution by all parties.

County staff will notify each respondent of the final selection of the review team. Proposals received from non-selected candidates will be retained on file by the County for two years in the event the selected firm or individual is unable to fulfill the services.

V. RESERVATION OF RIGHTS

The County reserves the right to do any of the following:

1. Cancel the RFP process at any time
2. Amend or modify the Scope of Work prior to the submission of proposals as necessity may dictate
3. Cancel the RFP after opening but prior to award if the County determines that cancellation is in the best interest of the County for the reasons including, but not limited to:
    a. The service(s) are no longer required
    b. Services in the proposals received are at an unreasonable cost
    c. Proposals did not independently arrive in open competition, were collusive or were not submitted in good faith
    d. The County determines, after analysis of the statements, that needs can be satisfied through an alternative method
4. Negotiate contract terms and conditions with any qualified proposer
5. Reject any response which is in any way not in compliance with the RFP
6. Decline award of a contract

VI. CONTRACT TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The successful proposer shall enter into a contract with substantially the same terms and conditions as the Professional Services Agreement attached hereto as Exhibit 1 and comply with the terms and conditions required by the County. The professional services agreement between the vendor and County is subject to approval by County Counsel, Risk Manager, and the Board of Supervisors. Respondents shall identify in writing any requested exceptions to the specified terms. Objections to the terms and conditions not made prior to submission of the response are deemed waived.

VII. PUBLIC RECORDS AND TRADE SECRETS

All proposals and materials submitted become the property of the County and are subject to disclosure under the Public Records Act (Government Code §7920.000 et seq.). However, if prior to the award of a contract further negotiations are contemplated, the County must discern whether public disclosure should await the completion of the negotiations. In these circumstances the County must establish that the public interest in nondisclosure clearly outweighs the public's interest in disclosure (Government Code §§ 7929.000 & 7922.540(a); *Michaelis, Montanari and Johnson v. Superior Court (Los Angeles)* (2006) 38 Cal.4th 1065).

The Request for Proposals and all responses are considered public information with the exception noted above and for trade secrets specifically identified, which will be handled according to state statutes or other laws. Any information that contains trade secrets shall be communicated to County by the respondent. Any page of the proposal that is deemed to be a trade secret by the respondent shall be clearly marked "PROPRIETARY INFORMATION" at the top of the page in at least one-half inch (1/2") size letters.

In the event that the County receives a request for disclosure of any such specifically identified information, prior to release of any such specifically identified information, the County will contact the proposer and will not release the specifically identified information if the proposer agrees to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the County in any action brought to disclose such information. The proposer, by submitting such information, agrees that the failure of County to contact the proposer prior to the release of such information will not be a basis for liability by the County or any County employee to proposer.

VIII. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Proposer warrants and covenants that no official or employee of the County, nor any business entity in which an official of the County has an interest, has been employed or retained to solicit or assist in the procuring of the resulting contract, nor that any such person will be employed in the performance of such contract without immediate divulgence of such fact to the County.

IX. INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

The successful proposer shall meet the insurance requirements set forth in the Professional Services Agreement attached hereto as Exhibit 1.

X. INDEMNIFICATION

Contractor shall hold harmless, defend and indemnify County and its officers, officials, employees and volunteers from and against any and all liability, loss, damage, expense, costs (including without limitation costs and fees of litigation) of every nature arising out of or in connection with contractor's performance of work hereunder or its failure to comply with any of its obligations contained in the agreement, except such loss or damage which was caused by the sole negligence or willful misconduct of the County.

XI. ASSIGNMENT

Any contract resulting from this response to the RFP and any amendments or supplements thereto shall not be assignable by the successful candidate firm or individual

either voluntarily or by operation of law, without the written approval of the County, and shall not become an asset in any bankruptcy, receivership, or guardianship proceedings.

XII. INQUIRY

Direct all inquiries regarding RFQ No. PLN2023-03 to:

Suzanne Lippre
Administrative Analyst
Planning & Building Department
County of Humboldt
3105 H Street, Eureka, CA 95501
(707) 268-3728 Fax (707) 268-3792

Attachments:
Exhibit 1 – County of Humboldt Professional Services Agreement Example
Attachment A – RFP Cover Page
Attachment B – Reference Data Sheet
Exhibit 2 – Text from Town Center Zone and Community Plan modification.