



Item: Downtown Access, Circulation and Streetscape Study

From: Mike Haynes, AICP, Director, Planning and Community Development

Initiated By: Wendy Thomas, AICP, Deputy Director, Planning and Community Development

Presented By: Mike Haynes, Planning and Community Development Department Director

Action Requested: Award Contract

Suggested Motion:

1. Commissioner moves:

“I move that the City Commission (approve/reject) the contract in the amount of \$120,000 for the Downtown Access, Circulation and Streetscape Study to DESIGN WORKSHOP, Inc.”

2. Mayor calls for a second, discussion, inquiries from the public, and calls for the vote.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends the City Commission approve the contract with DESIGN WORKSHOP, Inc to study the downtown central business district to make recommendations on streetscape design, parking improvements and traffic circulation, specifically regarding the potential conversion of one-way streets to two-way streets.

Background:

The Downtown Master Plan, adopted by the City Commission on October 18, 2011, provides the community with a strategically focused, goal driven blueprint for the future of downtown Great Falls. Included in the plan are 5 goals, 26 objectives and 82 strategies focused on downtown vitality, aesthetics, accessibility and livability. The design, function and aesthetic quality of downtown’s built environment, including the area’s streets and roadways, have been identified as critical elements in achieving the community’s vision for downtown.

Purpose

The Downtown Access, Circulation and Streetscape Study will make recommendations, outline process and provide cost estimates for implementing key objectives of the Downtown Master Plan including the following:

- Improve pedestrian connectivity and safety downtown.
- Reduce or eliminate downtown one-ways.
- Develop a comprehensive downtown bicycle network to connect into a city-wide system.
- Optimize downtown parking for all stakeholders.
- Develop a comprehensive downtown wayfinding system.
- Expand and enhance the existing downtown streetscape.

The objectives are intended to create a safe, attractive, efficient and welcoming downtown street environment.

To implement these key objectives, the plan will include the following four components:

- A Downtown Parking study that assesses inventory, availability, utilization and management of existing parking facilities, both public and private. The study will recommend changes to the City administered parking program based on analysis of data and input from residents, business owners and building owners. The study will consider parking together with the other elements of the study.
- A Downtown Streetscape and Roadway Characteristics plan that creates a comprehensive, unified plan for the form, function and aesthetics of public rights-of-way downtown. In addition to such things as safety and efficiency, the Streetscape plan will include gateway and wayfinding features and be designed to facilitate a healthy, active and vibrant downtown and consider the historic and cultural character of the City center.
- A One-way to Two-way Conversion study that evaluates the feasibility of converting one-way streets in and leading to the downtown area to two-way travel. The study will explore the costs and benefits of full or partial conversions based on research, analysis and modeling, and recommendations will be based on these findings and community input and preference, as well as concurrence by the City's partners in the Transportation Planning Process. The Study will include 1st and 2nd Avenues South and 5th and 6th Streets.
- An Implementation plan including prioritization, phasing and conceptual cost estimates of improvements.

Each element will include public meetings and other avenues to solicit public input.

Evaluation and Selection Process

The RFP/RFQ was advertised in the *Great Falls Tribune* on April 4 and April 8, 2012, advertised on the City of Great Falls website, and posted on the American Planning Association website. The submittals were received on May 1, 2012. Eight firms responded. The responses were scored by a group composed of representatives of: Great Falls Area Transit, Neighborhood Council 7, Public Works, Business Improvement District, Planning & Community Development and City Administration. The scoring sheets are attached to this report.

Conclusion

The selection team found DESIGN WORKSHOP, Inc. to be the highest scoring submittal.

Concurrences: The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and the Policy Coordinating Committee (PCC) approved the funding of this study with Metropolitan Planning Funds (PL) funds. The Montana Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration each reviewed and approved the scope and the final contract.

Fiscal Impact: The study is being paid for through two funding sources: \$100,000 of Federal Transportation Planning funds and \$20,000 from the Parking Fund.

The City of Great Falls is one of three MPOs (Metropolitan Planning Organizations) in Montana by virtue of having a population over 50,000 people. The purpose of the MPO is to support a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive regional framework for making transportation investment decisions. MPOs receive federal fund allocations each year called PL (Public Law) funds. PL funds are FWHA metropolitan planning funds - a one percent set-aside from federal transportation bills - that can only be used for transportation planning purposes. They cannot be used for construction or non-planning projects. The Montana Department of Transportation confirmed that, as of April 2012, the Great Falls MPO has an estimated fund balance of \$1.2 million in unused PL funds. As previously mentioned, TAC recommended and PCC approved use of PL funds for a Downtown Access, Circulation and Streetscape Study.

The Parking Advisory Commission unanimously supported the allocation of \$20,000 for the parking study in their review of the Parking Fund budget for FY 2012.

Alternatives: The City Commission could vote to reject the contract.

Attachments/Exhibits:

- RFP/RFQ Submittal List
- Review Committee Scoring Sheet

Downtown Access, Circulation and Streetscape

RFP/RFQ Submittal List

1. LSA Associates, Inc.
132 West Mountain Avenue
Fort Collins, CO 80524

2. Desman Associates
7900 East Union Avenue, Suite 925
Denver, CO 80237

3. Landmark Design Team
2834 Highland Drive
Salt Lake City, UT 84106

4. Design Workshop, Inc.
120 East Main Street
Aspen, CO 81611

5. LMN Architects
801 2nd Avenue, Suite 501
Seattle, WA 98104

6. Peaks to Plains Design PC
404 N 31st Street, Suite 405
Billings, MT 59101

7. RPA
P.O. Box 5653
Helena, MT 59604

8. Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.
7740 N. 16th Street, Suite 300
Phoenix, AZ 85020

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RFP Score Sheet

	LSA	Desman	Landmark	Design Workshop	LMN	Peaks	RPA	Kimley - Horn
Qualifications	469	403	444	518	480	470	486	495
Proposal	<u>566</u>	<u>435</u>	<u>536</u>	<u>575</u>	<u>539</u>	<u>568</u>	<u>567</u>	<u>581</u>
TOTAL	1035	838	980	1093	1019	1038	1053	1076