Atascadero City Council
Staff Report – Community Development Department

Eagle Ranch Annexation and Specific Plan
EIR Consultant Qualification Listing

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Council:

1. Approve Exhibit A, ranking the top three qualified consultants to prepare an environmental impact report for the Eagle Ranch Specific Plan; and,

2. Authorize the City Manager to negotiate and execute a contract with Michael Brandman & Associates, the number one ranked consultant. If an acceptable contract cannot be reached, the City Manager is authorized to negotiate with the next qualified consultant on the list.

DISCUSSION:

Background: On March 3, 2008, the City of Atascadero received an Annexation, General Plan Amendment and Specific Plan application for a master plan development project on the Eagle Ranch property. The Eagle Ranch consists of 3,450± acres located adjacent to the City’s southwestern boundary. The Eagle Ranch property contains 452 Atascadero Colony lots and associated roadway networks, originally established by E.G. Lewis in 1914. Annexation of the Eagle Ranch to Atascadero is consistent with the City’s General Plan policies and recognized by San Luis Obispo County and LAFCo with the City’s sphere of influence.
The City’s 2002 General Plan identifies the Eagle Ranch property as a future master plan area to include reconfiguration/clustering of existing colony lots and roadways, resort facilities, and inclusion of public open space, conservation easements, trails, and recreation areas, prior to annexation into the City (see following policies). The General Plan requires that a Specific Plan be approved by the City to provide a comprehensive development plan for the property that addresses issues including:

- Clustering of colony lots
- Public facilities
- Circulation facilities
- Parks
- Open space
- Conservation easements
- Resort facilities
- Fiscal analysis of service costs

**General Plan Policies related to Eagle Ranch:**
LOC 1.2.8. Cooperate with LAFCO and the County to incorporate the Eagle Ranch into the City's Sphere of Influence for eventual annexation.

(Completed in 2003)

LOC 1.2.9. It is the City's position, that Eagle Ranch shall be developed within the City and any development of the site prior to annexation will be opposed.

LOC 1.2.10. Prior to the annexation of Eagle Ranch a Specific Plan shall be approved by the City which will provide a comprehensive development plan for the property that address issues including, clustering of Colony lots, public facilities, circulation facilities, parks, open space, conservation easements, and a fiscal analysis of service costs.

LOC 1.2.11. Update and maintain the Zoning Ordinance to designate the Eagle Ranch property as a future Specific Plan area to be subject to future environmental and site-specific review prior to annexation.

Table II-5: Master Plan of Development Overlay Areas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overlay Number</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>EIR Maximum Density</th>
<th>Special Features</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| 11             | Eagle Ranch Annexation | Development of existing 400 colony lots | - Specific Plan required  
- Historic colony lots and roads to be reconfigured and clustered to minimize impacts  
- Public open space, trails and parks to be provided  
- Resort facilities |

Project Description
A conceptual project description and preliminary land use plan have been developed by the applicant based on the site constraints, previous community meetings, as well as preliminary meetings with staff and the Council. As proposed, the project would use a clustered approach in order to minimize the impact on the site and maximize open space.

Preliminary surveys and analysis have been conducted to identify major site constraints. Steep slopes, historical and cultural resources, native trees, creeks, riparian areas, wetlands, and areas of potential biological importance have been identified and mapped. A constraints map has been provided by the applicant to identify areas to be avoided and areas most feasible for development.
Analysis: Due to the size of the annexation area and the scope of the project, an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will be required to comply with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The applicant has requested the City initiate the EIR process concurrently with the development of the project design and Specific Plan. The concurrent processing is proposed in order to incorporate the studies and findings of the EIR into the early stages of the project design. On August 10, 2010, Council authorized staff to begin the process of selecting a consultant to prepare the EIR for the City.

Due to the comprehensive scope of an EIR, its preparation would require an experienced and qualified professional consultant under contract and management by the City. In order to ensure compliance with CEQA regulations, the City (not the applicant) would contract directly with the environmental consultant. The cost of preparing the EIR and Specific Plan will be the full responsibility of the applicant. The City will directly manage the environmental consultant and will control the scope of
work. A complete EIR will be prepared as required by CEQA, consistent with standard EIR components for public review and comment.

Due to the complexity of the project and the applicant’s desire for a concurrent EIR / Specific Plan process, staff decided to solicit a Request for Qualifications (RFQ’s) rather than a Request for Proposal (RFP).

**RFQ Process and Interviews**

The City issued an RFQ and advertised Statewide for a qualified consultants to prepare an EIR for the Eagle Ranch Specific Plan. The RFQ asked for firm and key staff experience in successfully completing similar sized EIR’s. The City received a total of 12 Statements of Qualifications (SOQ’s). A staff selection committee consisting of Warren Frace, Community Development Director; Russ Thompson, Public Works Director; and Brian Pierik, City Attorney was assembled to review the SOQ’s. The committee reviewed all of the SOQ’s and selected the top six firms for interviews.

On December 3, 2010, the committee interviewed the following firms:

- AMEC Earth & Environmental
- De Novo Planning Group
- RBF Consulting
- ESA
- LSA Associates, Inc.
- Michael Brandman & Associates

Each firm was given time to make a presentation and explain the firm’s qualifications which was then followed by committee questions. Following the interviews, the committee ranked the top three qualified firms as follows:

1. Michael Brandman & Associates
2. LSA Associates, Inc.
3. RBF Consulting

Michael Brandman & Associates (MBA) was selected as the most qualified consultant based on their work experience, references and staff assigned to the project. MBA is currently under contract with the City to prepare the Del Rio Road Commercial Area (Walmart) EIR. Under the current contract, MBA has been very responsive, efficient and prepared high quality work.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

The entire EIR consultant contract will be funded by the project applicant with a 10% City administration fee. The preparation of the EIR will be revenue neutral to the City of Atascadero.
**ALTERNATIVES:**

1. Direct staff to re-evaluate the consultant ranking.

**ATTACHMENT:**

1. Exhibit A: Qualified Eagle Ranch EIR consultant list
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification Ranking</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>1.</td>
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