



# MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** August 7, 2007

**TO:** City Council

**FROM:** Thomas Rogers, Associate Planner  
Community Development Department

**RE:** **Agenda Item I1: Discussion and Possible Direction on Subcommittee's Proposed Approach to the El Camino Real/Downtown Visioning Process**

At Mayor Pro Tem Cohen's request, this item has been added to the agenda regarding the El Camino Real/Downtown Subcommittee's proposed approach for visioning and planning efforts. The Council may discuss and provide direction on the proposed initial work plan.

## ATTACHMENTS

- A. Correspondence from the El Camino Real/Downtown Subcommittee
- B. Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for El Camino Real/Downtown Visioning Plan Draft

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To: Menlo Park City Council  
From: Downtown Visioning Subcommittee

Subject: Update  
Date: July 31, 2007

Urgent: Please review immediately in order to allow for an item to be agendaized for next week if needed.

All,

Enclosed is an interim report on our progress and our proposed course of action. We felt that the update warranted more visibility than the standard end-of-a-council-meeting Council member report, but did not necessarily require a full-fledged agendaized item for discussion. In order to continue our momentum, we'd like to take action (as noted below) in the next few weeks, so if you would like to discuss any of this prior to that action, please request adding it to next week's Council agenda so we can act on it before our Council's two week August break.

There are three key items we wanted to bring to your attention:

1. In order to ensure that the Downtown Visioning kick-off meeting is well attended and productive, we've decided to take a few steps of work to prepare in advance of the kick-off itself. In agreement with Council direction relating to the need for an event to get the community engaged early on, additional work is needed to set this up right. Thus the kick-off meeting will be pushed out a bit. We feel that a successful kickoff is critical, and it's worth taking the time to prepare enough to do it well.
2. One preparatory step will be to produce and mail to all residents an outreach flier introducing the visioning project to a wide public audience. The objective of the initial mailer will be three-fold:
  - a. Share some background on the visioning process, objectives, and importance (probably just 1-2 paragraphs and some pictures/maps)
  - b. Solicit some initial open-ended feedback from our residents on what they like and/or dislike about Santa Cruz and El Camino (probably 5-6 total questions).
  - c. Solicit interest in participation in the process and gather contact information/preferences.

We're envisioning a 1-2 sided mailer with some form of tear out, prepaid return sheet for their responses. If possible, we'll also try to collect this info via a web form on the city website.

Unless directed otherwise, we are targeting moving forward with this mailer ASAP, with an expected mailing date prior to the end of August. As the project moves

forward, the mailer is projected to become a regular newsletter, informing the community of progress and soliciting ongoing input.

3. The second item we feel needs to be done prior to the kick-off meeting is to hire a “process consultant” for the Vision Plan process. As the subcommittee has used the preceding weeks to conduct research and speak to practitioners in the field, it has become clearer that many cities that have pursued such plans have used a consultant who specializes in defining and managing the process itself. As noted in a prior council member report, there will be other specialized skill sets for which we’ll most likely also need to contract out including: community outreach, meeting facilitation, and land use/transportation expertise. The process consultant may have some/all of these skill sets in-house, or they may be outsourced to independent firms.

We’re proposing to issue an RFQ (Request for Qualifications) now to solicit general information and background experience from possible process consultants. A draft RFQ is attached for your review. Note that an RFQ is very general and is primarily designed simply to identify the interest, qualifications, and approaches of several candidates. Armed with this information, we will better understand our options and be well-positioned to formulate a specific RFP (Request for Proposal) to select an eventual process consultant. Prior to issuing that RFP, we plan to present a summary of the RFQ responses along with a draft RFP for discussion and public comment at a Council meeting. We will not issue the RFP or select the process consultant prior to this public discussion.

If no changes to the RFQ are needed, we are targeting an issuance by mid-August, with responses due by mid-September. The Council’s review of the RFQ responses and draft RFP would follow shortly thereafter.

The immediate RFQ issuance would be primarily background/administrative in nature, but the subcommittee wanted to give the other Council members an opportunity to comment about it. In the absence of any objections, we will proceed as outlined above. However, if any of you are uncomfortable with the plan outlined above, please request by **noon of Thursday, 8/2** that we add a discussion item to next week’s Council agenda (Aug 7<sup>th</sup>). By way of this memo, we (Rich and John) give our explicit support to your request, if desired, to agendize such an item.

Please note that the current efforts relate only to the Phase I “Vision Plan” process. As currently projected, this process would result in a document that would inform a subsequent Phase II “Specific Plan.” The process and work plan for a Specific Plan would be reviewed and evaluated in detail by the Council at a future date, after the completion of the Phase I efforts.

Thanks for your timely consideration of this matter.

/Downtown Visioning Subcommittee



# Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for El Camino Real/Downtown Visioning Plan

August \_\_, 2007

## Section 1: Background

### About Menlo Park

The City of Menlo Park is 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 Dumbarton Bridge to the East Bay. The City borders the communities of Atherton, Redwood City, Woodside, East Palo Alto, and Palo Alto, as well as unincorporated San Mateo County lands. 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 complimented 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 and Objectives

At its retreat in early 2007, the City Council identified a goal to engage in a community outreach process to identify a vision and establish implementation strategies for guiding policy decisions on land use and transportation proposals in the El Camino Real corridor and Santa Cruz Avenue area. The visioning process is expected to lead into work for a Specific Plan for these areas; however, work on these two phases will be conducted separately.

The Council has designated Council Members Boyle and Cline as the Council Subcommittee for this task. After considering various options, the Council Subcommittee has elected to post an RFQ (Request for Qualifications) for consulting services related to visioning and public outreach processes. Responses to this RFQ will be used to identify a “short list” of consultants who will be invited to submit full project proposals.

As stated by the Council Subcommittee, the consultant for this effort needs to possess a wide range of skills, either provided in-house or via sub-consultants:

1. *Process*: Expertise in setting up and managing the overall structure of this process
2. *Content*: Familiarity with land use and transportation topics, to help frame the visioning questions correctly
3. *Outreach*: Effectively connecting with a wide range of community members and other stakeholders
4. *Facilitation*: Making sure meetings run fairly and efficiently, and helping to articulate

opinions of those unfamiliar with land use and government terminology

While this process is taking place, the Council has concurrently approved consultant services to analyze previous planning efforts in the El Camino Real/Downtown area, research the visioning and planning efforts of other cities, and analyze medical office uses. This work will be presented for public review, and will be available for use by consultants working on future phases of the overall effort.

## **Section 2: Content**

A response to this RFQ should contain the following elements:

### Contact Information

Name, address, and phone number of the consulting firm.

### Statement of Qualifications

The proposal shall include a description of the firm and its qualifications for providing consulting services relating to visioning efforts. Please include information relating to your philosophy and general approaches to such efforts.

### Key Personnel

Names of key personnel, their respective titles, experience, and periods of service with the firm. If sub-consultants would be used in a visioning effort, include details for these team members in this section, if available.

### 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 all relevant background information.

### Fee Schedule

A fee schedule of labor costs, direct costs, and indirect costs.

### 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 3: Submittal Details**

Please submit two (2) bound copies and one (1) unbound copy of your statement of qualifications at your earliest convenience, but no later than \_\_\_\_\_ at 5 p.m. to:

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

#### **Section 4: Selection Process**

All responses to this RFQ will be reviewed by the Council Subcommittee and City staff. The Council Subcommittee will recommend to the City Council a “short list” of qualified consultants. The City Council will review this recommendation along with the full list of RFQ responses. After receiving public input, the City Council will make a final determination of which consultants shall be sent the RFP for the visioning effort, and the draft RFP will itself be reviewed and approved by the City Council at that point. That RFP will specify its own review and selection process.

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