

March 7, 2016

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA MEMORANDUM

Subject

Resolution No. 9074 authorizing execution of a professional services agreement with Balmori Associates to provide design and other related services for the Wilburton – Grand Connection study, in an amount not to exceed \$250,000.

Fiscal Impact

This contract allows the City to spend up to \$250,000 for design services related to the Grand Connection Visioning. This expenditure is part of Council's prior approval of \$1,000,000 for the entire Wilburton-Grand Connection project in the 2015-2016 budget (CIP Plan No. CD-33 Grand Connection/Land Use Wilburton Zoning).

The proposed consultant work is for an estimated \$250,000. All expenditures will be monitored by staff and additional services will not be requested from the consultant unless sufficient funds are available to cover the services.

Staff Contact

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Department of Planning and Community Development

Policy Consideration

RCW 39.80.010

The legislature hereby establishes a state policy, to the extent provided in this chapter, that governmental agencies publicly announce requirements for architectural and engineering services, and negotiate contracts for architectural and engineering services on the basis of demonstrated competence and qualification for the type of professional services required and at fair and reasonable prices.

Staff publicly announced the Request for Qualifications through several forms of print and online media, as well as distribution through the Public Purchase procurement portal, and through email solicitation. The contracted firm was selected based upon their expertise with similar project types and their demonstration of meeting the City's needs during this formative stage of the Grand Connection.

Background

The Wilburton-Grand Connection study will seek a new land use vision for the Wilburton Commercial Area that will capitalize on forthcoming infrastructure and transportation improvements as well as its proximity to the high growth centers of Downtown and BelRed. Ultimately the vision is for Wilburton to serve a unique niche in Bellevue, complementing its adjacent high growth centers. The Wilburton-Grand Connection study includes visioning from Meydenbauer Bay to the Eastside Rail Corridor. The two phases of the project will employ

separate consultants for the Wilburton Land Use and Urban Design study and the Grand Connection Visioning.

The first effort will focus on the high level visioning of the Grand Connection. To execute this vision staff sought design consultant services. The selected team includes highly qualified professionals in design, engineering, public engagement, mobility and, art.

The City used an RFQ and RFP process, as well as in-person interviews to assemble a talented and diverse applicant pool. After careful deliberation, staff has selected Balmori Associates to serve as the lead consultant for the Grand Connection Visioning Process. The team, including sub-consultants will consist of the following:

- Balmori Associates – Project Lead (New York)
- Mobility in Chain – Mobility Consultant (New York/Milan)
- Knippers Helbig – Structural Engineering & Bridge Design (New York/Stuttgart)
- Herrera – Public Engagement & Environmental Engineering (Seattle)

Balmori Associates was selected on the strength of their expertise and demonstrated project experience of similar scale and scope. They have completed and proposed projects on a national and international level in New York, Tennessee and Washington, DC; South Korea; and Spain. This work has included linear parks, pedestrian crossings, bridges, and a diverse range of landscape architecture work.

Their work on the 11th Street Bridge Competition in Washington, DC is a similar style project as the Grand Connection and includes a linear pedestrian route with a bridge across the Anacostia River connecting two Washington, DC urban neighborhoods. They earned finalists positions in both the Washington, DC competition and the High Line in New York City. Balmori Associates was also part of a team organized by the U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development to create strategies in response to the effects of Hurricane Sandy in Hoboken, New Jersey.

Balmori Associates most notable and context relative projects include:

- Beale Street Landing Park – Memphis, Tennessee
- The Garden That Climbs – Bilbao, Spain
- 11th Street Bridge Park – Washington, DC
- Broadway Malls Master Plan – New York, New York
- Lexington Town Branch Commons – Lexington, Kentucky
- Farmington Canal Greenway – New Haven, Connecticut
- New Government City Master Plan – Sejong, South Korea
- Abandoirbarra District Master Plan – Bilbao, Spain

The firm has received awards and grants from the American Institute of Architects – New York, Connecticut, and New England Chapters; American Society of Landscape Architects; The Institute of Green Professionals, International Association of Art Critics, and several other awards for urban design, landscape architecture, and sustainability.

Joining their team, and serving as their local contact will be the environmental, public engagement, and urban design team of Herrera. Their staff, located in Seattle, will lead and implement the public engagement strategy while offering environmental engineering expertise. Together the selected team and the City of Bellevue will craft innovative ways to engage the public and stakeholders while creating a unique and defining vision of the Grand Connection.

Balmori Associates will engage with the City to establish a high level urban design vision for the entire Grand Connection route, including the segment to span across I-405. The consultant will produce alternatives that include urban design, landscape architecture, infrastructure improvements, and programming that incorporates adjacent land uses and prioritizes non-motorized activity and social engagement.

Upon completion of the consultant's work, staff will use the information to advance the vision of the Grand Connection including identifying cost, implementation, and overall design. Additionally the information will be used to identify how the Grand Connection will interface with future land use patterns of the Wilburton Commercial Area, the Eastside Rail Corridor, and the Civic Center District.

The request for a total of \$250,000 covers all fees and anticipated expenses related to the services of the attached Scope of Work.

Selection Method

A Request for Qualifications (RFQ) was released on January 6, 2016 and closed on January 20, 2016. The RFQ was advertised on *The Seattle Times*, and through online planning resources Planetizen and the Congress for New Urbanism. Additionally 45 firms were selected and solicited via email based on prior experience and expertise with similar project types and design philosophies that are representative of the goals of the Grand Connection.

A total of 15 submittals were received, reviewed, and evaluated by staff from Planning and Community Development, Development Services, Parks and Community Services, and Transportation. Evaluation was based on criteria set forth in the scope of work in the RFQ. This criteria included the following:

- Demonstrated ability to work with large scale infrastructure improvements;
- Demonstrated experience in designing a non-motorized corridor in an urban environment;
- Demonstrated experience in programming public spaces using art, landscape, and urban design;
- Strength and experience of the lead and sub-consultants;
- Demonstrated experience in establishing connectivity between a variety of uses;
- Demonstrated experience in creating a high level of creativity and innovation in design and public engagement.

Submittals were received from leading firms in:

- Seattle, Washington
- Vancouver, British Columbia
- Los Angeles, California
- Atlanta, Georgia

- Washington, DC
- New York, New York
- Boston, Massachusetts
- Denver, Colorado

Following review of the 15 submittals, 5 firms were selected to submit proposals and conduct interviews with City staff. These five firms were chosen based on a scoring and ranking of their qualifications using the above mentioned criteria. In their proposals, the selected firms were asked to provide the following:

- A list of anticipated core staff, their roles, and time commitment to the project;
- A narrative briefly describing the anticipated roles of the selected sub-consultants;
- A narrative describing their approach to the project;
- A narrative describing their suggested role in public engagement;
- A proposed schedule/timeline that addressed the four phases of the project outlined in section “V. Sequence of Work” from the RFQ;
- A generalized breakdown of the proposed budget in “IV. Scope Modules” from the RFQ;
- A single project example for each of the following (including a brief narrative explaining its relevance to the City’s project):
 - A non-motorized network, path, or place through an urban environment;
 - A substantial piece of infrastructure or urban improvement project similar in scale and complexity as outlined in “Scope Module 2” of the RFQ;
 - A small scale, easy to implement urban design or placemaking strategy;
 - A single project of their choosing that best demonstrates the firm’s approach and design philosophy
- No more than 3 sample presentation graphics representative of the quality of the anticipated final deliverables.

Interviews with the 5 firms were held on February 4 and 5. The interview committee was composed of a multi-disciplinary team that included staff from Planning and Community Development, Transportation, Parks and Community Services, and Development Services.

Additionally the firms participated in a walking tour of a portion of the Grand Connection route starting at City Hall and working westward to Bellevue Way and Downtown Park. These tours were led by staff members from Planning and Community Development and Development Services.

Following review of the RFPs and interviews Balmori Associates was recommended to serve as the consultant. The total contract value is \$250,000 for a duration of approximately one year.

The selection process and proposed agreement are consistent with the City’s contracting and purchasing policies.

Effective Date

If approved the Resolution becomes effective immediately upon Council adoption.

Options

1. Approve the Resolution authorizing the execution of a professional services agreement with Balmori Associates to provide consultant design services in support of Planning and Community Development's Wilburton-Grand Connection study.
2. Do not approve the Resolution and provide alternative direction to staff.

Recommendation

Option 1.

Motion

Move to adopt Resolution No. 9074 authorizing the execution of a professional services agreement with Balmori Associates to provide consultant design services in support of Planning and Community Development's Wilburton-Grand Connection study.

Attachment

Proposed Resolution No. 9074

Available in Council Document Library

- Draft Professional Services Agreement with Balmori Associates
- Request for Qualifications