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CALAVERAS COUNCIL
of GOVERNMENTS

Summary of Questions and Responses from pre-submittal meeting for-
Rural Smart Growth: A Community-Based Plan for Valley Springs
Sequoia Conference Room, CalWORKS, 1pm
12.10.08

1. Q: What amenities will the staging facility for the consultant team include?
A: Most community events in Valley Springs are held at one of two elementary schools (Jenny Lind and Valley Springs) or the Veterans Hall. These facilities have the basic amenities; tables, chairs, projector, screen and PA system. Additional production materials or technologies will need to be provided by the proposing firm.
2. Q: What will be the Local Government Commission (LGC) role in the charrette process?
A: In coordination with the project partners LGC will take a lead role in event planning, conducting meetings, education presentations, trainings, and public input activities in collaboration with the consultant team.
3. Q: Will the LGC be involved in Land Use planning for the project?
A: The consultant will be principally responsible for developing the plan components and written document. LGC will participate in the development of plan concepts, provide supporting resources and photos for use in the plan document, and assist with written portions of the plan.
4. Q: What is the purpose of the community survey?
A: The community survey may be an important component of the public outreach process. Many hours have been invested in the existing survey by a local community group which will have members representing their interests as part of the Stakeholders Advisory body. The survey is anticipated to be reviewed by the entire Stakeholders group and the consultant team to determine the best method for meeting project needs.
5. Q: Will the Survey in its current form be made available to proposing firms?
A: Maybe. The survey was developed by a community group. The Project Partners will speak with the community group to solicit feedback on whether or not we can post the survey for review. If they acquiesce, it will be posted with the other documentation. (www.calacog.org)
6. Q: Will the Project Study Report for State Routes 12 and 26 be made available?
A: Yes. It is posted to the CCOG website (www.calacog.org)
7. Q: The community of Valley Springs has been actively engaged in community outreach activities through leadership from different community interests—what is the expectation of

community members (in regards to this grant/planning process) and interests who have been participating in these events to this point?

A: This grant represents the “opportunity” that the community has been working towards— combining the funding necessary to complete a planning study, the professional expertise of a qualified consultant team and the participation and recognition of the County. The grant is viewed as the vehicle which will provide for the formal coalescing of early grassroots outreach.

8. Q: Is there any prescriptive guidance for the development of the Community Plan?

A: No. A community plan is usually an optional element to a county wide general plan. However, the interaction of land use and transportation has been a formidable challenge in establishing a sense of community, and for maintaining community cohesion in the Valley Springs area, and can be seen as a springboard to specific community needs as can be specified in a community plan. The grant that has been awarded by Caltrans is for Community-Based Transportation Planning, so elements of the Plan to be created must have a tangential relationship to transportation to be addressed. The Transportation-Land Use link is well established and is expected to be a major component of the Plan as is determining the “planning area”.

9. Q: Have any Fiscal, Economic, Retail or Housing Analysis been done for the study area?

A: No. There are no studies being planned that the Project Partners are aware of.

10. Q: Will the pre-submittal attendance roster be made available?

A: Yes. Attending firms and contact information are provided on the CCOG website (www.calacog.org).

11. Q: Are there specific improvements, areas of interest or concern, that the community plan is expected to address?

A: There is the desire that a component of the study include evaluation how past and future development have cumulatively affected the greater Valley Springs area, in order to develop a sense of how this directly and indirectly impacts the community and the transportation needs of its residents. An analysis of existing development patterns and practices and an assessment of what development is proposed or has already been approved in the greater Valley Springs area may be necessary. Factors that were discussed included the apparent aggravation of flood intensity by development in Cosgrove Creek, and the characteristic dependency of rural communities upon rural highways (SR12 and SR26) for work and local commutes (e.g. driving children to school) and goods movement. It is anticipated that State Routes (SR) 12 and 26 will be a primary focus of this effort. These SR’s serve as the main arteries of the Community. Operational characteristics must be addressed in addition to protecting their functionality and identifying potential future alignments.

12. Q: Who will provide guidance on what will/won’t be allowed as components of the Community Plan?

A: The Caltrans contract manager will be providing oversight as to what are appropriate actions that may be undertaken for the grant. There is very little that is explicitly proscribed as far as the efforts undertaken to fulfill basic grant objectives that are consistent with good planning practices. Grant applications and criteria are provided at the Caltrans Transportation Planning/Community Planning website.

13. Q: Are Biotic/Biological studies available for Cosgrove Creek?

A: The Project Partners are unaware of specific environmental studies that are available concerning Cosgrove Creek. There are several species of concern present in the Valley Springs area, but no environmental studies specific to Cosgrove Creek have been undertaken. The County has been awarded a grant to undertake a Habitat and Conservation Plan, but no studies are yet underway. Cosgrove Creek is understood to be a 'Water of the US', and is therefore under jurisdiction of the US Army Corps of Engineers, and subject to their NEPA process. Developments in the Valley Springs area that are anticipated to have applied for Section 404 permits under ACOE that should include ESA compliant biological assessments for Cosgrove Creek include the Valley Springs Community Shopping Center., and the Gold Creek Housing Development. Negative Declarations by Caltrans for the Savage Way Rehabilitation Project (SR-26), and the Burson Rehabilitation Project (SR-12) may provide a regional perspective on biological resources. Final Project Reports for the two Caltrans project are available on the CCOG's website.

14. Q: From the Project Partners perspective, how does this planning process end/finish?
A: As far as the project schedule goes, with the ongoing County General Plan Update there is the hope that completion of the study would allow for adoption of an updated Valley Springs Community Plan coincident with circulation of the General Plan, however that does not appear realistic given the time parameters of the County effort. As far as deliverables, an approved final report, that provides some guidance on transportation projects the community supports, as well as potentially providing the lineaments of community values to be expressed in a community plan.
15. Q: Will Traffic analysis and data collection be necessary for this project?
A: Methods employed to generate a quality Plan are discretionary. As there have been local concerns voiced regarding congestion and safety upon State Route 26, there may exist a need; but projects underway (Improvement projects in the Valley Springs Benefit Basin, Safe Routes to School Grant for Jenny Lind Elementary, and the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funded SR12/SR26 intersection improvement-- signals or round about -- may be sufficient to address these concerns.
16. Q: How will Proposers meet Task 4.2 (C) in the scope of work for the project if the County completes the General Plan Update (GPU) prior to completion of the community based plan for Valley Springs?
A: The Project Partners would like for the proposing firms to remain current on the continuing effort on behalf of the County to update its General Plan. Currently, the GPU is scheduled to be completed prior to the completion of our project. However, should the GPU schedule be affected for some reason which alters its initial projected completion date, it is the intention that the consultant in cooperation with the Project Partners prepare our document to be submitted for inclusion with the GPU.
17. Q: Should the proposals include some form of CEQA document?
A: No. Funding for environmental work is specifically proscribed in the grant.
18. Q: What is the "Planning Area" for Valley Springs?
A: Answering this question will be an important component of this project.
19. Q: Has there been any talk/suggestion of Valley Springs becoming an incorporated city?
A: Members of the community have raised this question, but at this time, there is no serious effort that the Project Partners are aware of to work towards incorporation.

20. Q: How to proposing firms deal with issues of indemnification or exceptions to a component/s of the RFP?
A: Indemnifications or exceptions to any aspect of the RFP should be clearly stated in the proposal, and can be addressed by the selection committee, should this be necessary.
21. Q: What base mapping is available through the Project Partners?
A: The CCOG and County share a GIS database which includes aerials imagery collected as recently as 2006. The resolution of these layers are sub-meter. Currently being developed (and expected to be available to the successful firm) are two valuable layers: a “built” layer and a “current projects layer”. Consultant will have access to GIS data for this project.