



Legislation Text

File #: K-1718, **Version:** 2

CONTRACT K-1819-100: A CONTRACT BY AND BETWEEN THE CITY OF NORMAN, OKLAHOMA AND MANAGEMENT PARTNERS, INC., IN THE AMOUNT OF \$97,600 TO PERFORM PROFESSIONAL CONSULTING SERVICES TO CONDUCT AN ANALYSIS OF CITY DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESSES AND BUDGET APPROPRIATION FROM THE GENERAL FUND BALANCE.

BACKGROUND: During the August 2017 Council Retreat, the City Council identified a review of City business development processes as a short term goal (1-2 years) to be completed. Additionally, the draft *Economic Development Strategic Plan* conducted by the Norman Economic Development Coalition (NEDC) recommended the City pursue an evaluation of city processes to identify specific process improvements, assess departmental/division processes and performance, benchmark against peer communities, assess staffing levels, and recommend process approvals.

At the June 14, 2018, Council Oversight Committee meeting, staff presented information and received Committee feedback regarding the elements of the analysis and was directed to move forward with a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to hire a consulting firm to conduct the analysis of City development review processes. Funding in the amount of \$55,000 was set aside in the fiscal year 2018-2019 (FYE 2019) budget for the study, but additional appropriations will be needed to cover the project scope as developed through discussion and Council Oversight Committee input.

DISCUSSION: In September 2018, the City received three proposals from qualified consulting firms to conduct the analysis of City development review processes. Firms were interviewed in November 2018, and the firm of Management Partners, Inc. was selected to begin contract negotiations.

The analysis will begin with individual staff interviews to develop an understanding of roles, internal and external process participants, and handoffs. The firm will also interview a representative group of frequent private sector customers/stakeholders to understand their experiences with the development review process including intake, plan review, permit issuance, inspections and other areas that may be of concern. The firm will also examine current policies and procedures to understand how the system works and conduct benchmarking to compare Norman's performance information with that of comparable jurisdictions.

The observations and data collected in the initial analytical stage will lead to actionable steps for making Norman's development review process more efficient and effective.

The following are activities in the analysis scope of work:

- **Activity 1 - Start Project**
- **Activity 2 - Analyze Current Operations**
 - Conduct interviews with key leaders in the Planning and Community Development Department and with leaders from each of the divisions under study (Current Planning, Development Services, Compliance, and Stormwater) to:
 - Learn about the structure, staffing and work systems
 - Understand strengths and weaknesses of each division and divisions that participate in permitting and development processes
 - Hear feedback about existing technology
 - Understand the current culture surrounding development services
 - Hear ideas for improving communication and service integration and ways to eliminate redundancy and unnecessary process steps.
- **Activity 3 - Create Process Maps**

- **Activity 4 - Obtain Feedback from Users**

- Meet individually with representatives of a broad range of development applicants who fit one or more of the following characteristics:
 - Large developer/contractor
 - Small developer/contractor
 - First time applicant/contractor
 - Architect/engineer
 - Experienced residential developer/contractor
 - Experienced commercial developer/contractor
- Management Partners will conduct individual interviews with an agreed-upon number of applicants, customers and stakeholders to learn about their experiences with the development review process in the areas of customer service, timeliness of plans review, permit issuance, and inspections. They will solicit input about aspects of the process that work well, communication, and areas for improvement.

- **Activity 5 - Gather Comparative Performance Information**

- Management Partners will conduct benchmarking research with peer communities identified in conjunction with the City's project manager to obtain relevant comparisons and an understanding of the different approaches peer jurisdictions are using to deliver services. They will obtain information to enable comparison of various aspects of development review and permitting processes and requirements, with a focus on measurable performance data as available. Once relevant data is collected, Management Partners will analyze the results for applicability to Norman, focusing on processes, programs, policies, performance metrics, and fees.

- **Activity 6 - Summarize Opportunities for Improvement**

- Management Partners will examine what was learned and documented through the workflow process maps and will identify ways to improve development review business processes, communications, and how technology can best be used to improve and streamline application submission and intake, plans review, permitting, and inspections within and between departments and divisions involved in development review functions.
- Once the analysis is complete, they will prepare a memorandum that contains observations, assessments and preliminary recommendations. It is likely to include the following:
 - Documentation of current development review processes and process maps
 - Identification of process improvements using "to-be" process maps
 - Documentation of technology and software used to support existing review, permitting, inspection and payment functions
 - Recommendations for process and workflow improvements

- **Activity 7 - Facilitate Decision-Making Process for Improvement**

- Management Partners will plan and lead a three-day decision-making session involving members of City staff having responsibility for the daily processing of the City's development review function using the GE Work-Out™ technique. This technique, developed by General Electric to develop the specific steps needed to adapt an existing organization or business process to new performance expectations, has been used successfully by Management Partners with staff teams in many local jurisdictions to improve the development review process.

- **Activity 8 - Support Implementation**

- Based on the results of the Work Out, Management Partners will prepare a draft Implementation Action Plan. This document will be based on the action planning developed during the Work-Out and approved by management, but will set forth the steps required to accomplish implementation, the relative priority level (immediate, near or long term) for each recommendation and a suggested manager to be designated as responsible for implementation of the item.

- **Post-Plan Progress Checkup**

- A structured process six months after the action plan is finalized to assess how implementation is

proceeding and whether changes to the plan are needed. This will allow any of the more complex implementation issues encountered to be addressed and to support the City's work in driving implementation.

Additional information regarding each area is included in the attached contract and scope of work. Work is anticipated to take 4-5 months to complete.

Partial funding for this consultant engagement in the amount of \$55,000 was set aside in the FYE 2019 budget for the study in the General Fund, Special Studies, Consultant-Management/Research (account 010-1093-413.40-01), but additional appropriations will be needed to cover the project scope as developed during Council Subcommittee discussions. Funding in the amount of \$42,600 is being requested from the City's General Fund Balance (account 010-0000-253.20-00) to cover the entire contract cost.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of a contract by and between the City of Norman, Oklahoma and Management Partners, Inc. in the amount of \$97,600 to perform professional consulting and related work to conduct an analysis of City development review processes and appropriation of \$42,600 from the General Fund Balance (010-0000-253.20-00) to Consultant-Management/Research (010-1093-413.40-01).