



## **Request for Qualifications**

### **Idaho Land Use Analysis**

### **Idaho Smart Growth**

**Posted:** 2/08/10

**Submittal Deadline:** 03/26/10

#### I. INTRODUCTION

##### **Project Introduction**

In coordination with a coalition of partners including the Idaho Chapter of the American Planning Association, the Idaho District Council of the Urban Land Institute, Boise State University, the University of Idaho, and many others, Idaho Smart Growth is soliciting qualification submissions from professional planning Consultants to review data collected regarding the current state of land use planning in Idaho and provide recommendations.

The recommendations must reflect Smart Growth best practices (<http://smartgrowthamerica.org/sghowto.html>). Idaho Smart Growth anticipates a total project budget of \$7,500.

#### II. PROJECT OVERSIGHT

##### Selection Committee

The Idaho Land Use Analysis Steering committee consists of representatives from the Idaho Chapter of the American Planning Association, the Idaho District Council of the Urban Land Institute, Boise State University, and the University of Idaho. The committee will review and discuss the content of the qualification submissions, short-list to approximately three firms or individuals and finally submit a recommendation to the hiring sub-committee.

##### Point-of-Contact

Respondents shall restrict all contact and questions regarding this RFQ and selection process to the individual named herein. Questions concerning terms, conditions and technical specifications shall be directed in writing to: Diane Kushlan, Planning and Management Services, P.O. Box 8463, Boise, ID 83707 or email [dkushlan@fiberpipe.net](mailto:dkushlan@fiberpipe.net).

#### III. BACKGROUND

##### Project Area

Idaho is the twelfth fastest growing state in the country. According to U.S. Census data released in April 2007, Idaho's urban areas are growing three times faster than the rest of the country's urban areas. And

unlike other forward thinking states like Oregon and Washington, Idaho has not planned for this explosive growth.

Idaho State Statutes require cities and counties to have comprehensive plans and zoning and subdivision ordinances. Like most states, there is no state-based funding for cities and counties to carry out their planning. However, unlike most states, Idaho does not have a statewide planning agency, nor does the state provide any statewide planning assistance.

Many Idaho cities and counties have limited or nonexistent budgets for planning; and in most rural communities, clerks, treasurers, and engineers function as the planning staff. Because of these limitations, many communities are using comprehensive plans and ordinances that were put in place when the state land use planning law was enacted in 1975. Due to antiquated or inadequate plans and regulations, some new developments are poorly integrated into existing communities and fail to incorporate smart growth and sustainable planning principles.

Idaho communities struggle to keep up with and address factors related to increased growth, such as the provision of adequate infrastructure, meeting the demands for housing, protection of open space and working lands, maintenance of economic vitality, and preservation of natural and recreational amenities. As gas prices continue to fluctuate, the impact and significance of these factors increases as well.

Responsibility for service delivery is often fragmented among many public and quasi-public agencies, Lack of guidance in state law on how to coordinate among agencies further challenges the ability of communities to plan for future infrastructure needs. In addition, current law provides little guidance on planning for natural resources such as water and energy that cross over jurisdictional boundaries or effective criteria and processes for evaluating projects that involve regional or state-wide impacts.

#### Project Description

After consulting with experts such as the APA's research staff, ULI staff, and allies in other states, a project has been initiated in three phases in order to respond to these issues: Task 1, which is almost completed, involves an inventory of the manner in which planning is carried out at the local level in Idaho. Comprehensive plans and ordinances have been collected, and evaluated on the basis of currency and completeness. The database has been digitized and is available on-line to interested parties. (<http://www.bioregionalplanning.uidaho.edu/IdahoPlanning/default.aspx>.)

Task 2 involves two survey tools: (1) an on-line survey of planners, elected officials planning commission members, applicants, citizen activists, consultant and others who are involved in the planning process; and (2) geographically targeted focus groups. Both the survey and focus groups will provide an assessment of the planning process at the local level based on a variety of stakeholders involved in the process.

The survey work in phases 1 and 2 provides a comprehensive analysis of Idaho laws, policies, rules, and permitting provisions at the state, county, and local levels. The analysis evaluates positive and negative effects of the existing statutes and how the standards are implemented at the local level. To assure credible, unbiased results, research teams from Boise State University and the University of Idaho are completing the analysis.

The third task of the project, the focus of this RFQ, is for a professional planner with regional and national experience to assess the inventory and survey information and to lay some foundation for changes to state statutes and local codes and the manner in which planning is carried out at the local level. The assessment will include consideration of the recommendations of resources such as the "Growing Smart Legislative Handbook".

The person selected for this task will write an assessment of recommended reforms.

### Consultant Qualifications

Consultants should demonstrate knowledge and experience in the following areas:

1. Basic knowledge of the state of Idaho and the western region.
2. Local land use planning.
3. Smart growth principles
4. Federal, state and local laws/ordinances that support Smart Growth/Quality Growth principles.
5. Implementing smart growth/quality growth laws and ordinances.
6. Knowledge of the *Growing Smart Legislative Guidebook*, prepared by the American Planning Association

## IV. CONTRACT DELIVERABLES

The final deliverables should include, but are not limited to a reproducible and digital written report of recommendations addressing the questions listed below. Recommendations should be ranked in priority order and organized by unit of government. The assessment will include a determination of other statutes or rules, processes and regulations that should be implemented that would provide incentives to encourage sustainable development, reduce overall cost and increase efficiency in the provisions of services (impacts) to the cities and counties, provide housing choices, protect clean water and habitat, and promote smart growth principles.

Primary questions to be addressed include:

### Changing the Outcomes

1. How can we best direct development towards existing communities and infrastructure?
2. How can land use and transportation planning be better integrated?
3. Is it feasible in Idaho to limit development in the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) with local planning and zoning ordinances?
4. For communities that are prioritizing protection of working lands and/or open space, what does Idaho need in the state statute and what can communities do on the local level to facilitate protection?

### Changing the processes, systems and organizations

1. How can the fragmentation of government and service delivery be addressed?
2. Idaho agencies and jurisdictions collect and report on data to varying degrees and using varying methods. How can data be used to better influence planning? What are some recommended ways to centralize and standardize data related to land use planning?
3. How can statewide planning capacity/communication amongst agencies be created? Is there a mechanism for state and local agencies to more effectively be involved in the local land use planning process and decisions? Is it feasible to create a state planning agency and state plan?
4. Since local communities have no jurisdiction over surface and ground water resources in Idaho, how can they best work to protect them?

### Examples from other States

1. What is being done in other places around the country that might be successful in Idaho?
2. What are demonstrated effective approaches to affect legislative changes in states like Idaho?

### Next Steps

1. What reforms are needed in order to ensure the objectives of Idaho's Land Use Planning Act are met and Idaho's communities remain vibrant?

2. What are the best opportunities for meaningful change at the local, regional, and state levels to encourage smart growth and sustainable development (ordinances, laws, administrative regulations)? What are the small, easy changes that could be made and which are longer term changes? What roadblocks should be removed? What should be defended?
3. Within the next 3-5 years, what are the 1-2 most important and achievable “wins” that could be made for (a) creating sustainable communities, (b) protecting Idaho’s surface and groundwater resources, and (c) conserving habitat?
4. What are Idaho’s research needs on these issues?

## V. SUBMISSION DETAILS

### Deadline for Proposal Submissions

Proposals must be received no later than March 26, 2010 (5 PM Mountain Standard Time). Packages must be emailed to: Diane Kushlan, [dkushlan@fiberpipe.net](mailto:dkushlan@fiberpipe.net).

### Submission Requirements

Applicants shall submit electronically a thoughtful, clear and well-organized package that demonstrates the required Consultant Qualifications and includes the following items:

1. Statement of Interest: Provide a statement of interest for the project. The letter shall include a narrative description of the strengths brought by the applicant. The letter should also include full contact information (name, address, telephone, fax, email).
2. Experience and Expertise: Include qualifications and experience of the applicant. Provide a resume giving the experience and expertise of the applicant. Highlight experience with similar projects and specific planning issues relevant to this project.
3. Three client references. Indicate what work was performed, the year the work was performed and provide a contact name, email and/or telephone number for each reference.
4. A brief relevant writing sample.
5. Budget: Include a statement that the budget of \$7,500 is sufficient for the level of work anticipated.

Applications MUST be submitted electronically. Late packets will be not be reviewed. The steering committee reserves the right to accept or reject proposals that do not contain all elements and information requested in this document.

## VI. SELECTION PROCESS

### Evaluation of Proposals

The Idaho Land Use Analysis Steering committee will review the applications and make recommendations to the hiring sub-committee. The hiring subcommittee will conduct phone interviews with up to three finalists. Applicants will be notified in April 2010 regarding the final selection.

### Timeline

The following dates are intended to provide a guideline for this process, and are subject to change.

- \* RFQ available (February 8, 2010)
- \* Deadline for Qualifications (March 26, 2010)
- \* Consultant interviews (early April, 2010)
- \* Selection announced (April 25, 2010 or earlier)
- \* Final Report due (June 15, 2010)

### Proposal Selection Process and Evaluation

The Selection Committee will evaluate submissions based on Consultant Qualifications and the required Submission Requirements numbered 1-5 in this document.

Expenses incurred by the respondents in replying to the RFQ or any communications with the Selection Committee are the respondents' alone. There will be no compensation for these expenses.

Idaho Smart Growth will serve as the lead contact on this project. Idaho Smart Growth was formed in 2000 to build the capacity of Idahoans to shape the future of their communities as they envision it, to increase public awareness of the links between land use, transportation and the quality of life, and to promote thoughtful long range planning at local, regional, and state levels.