



CITY OF BISHOP

377 West Line Street - Bishop, California 93514
Post Office Box 1236 - Bishop, California 93515
760-873-5863 fax (760) 873-8473

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

The City of Bishop, California, is seeking a qualified consultant to assist in the preparation of an Economic Element of its General Plan.

Background

The City of Bishop is located in the spectacular Eastern Sierra region of California roughly half way between Los Angeles and Reno, Nevada. It is the only incorporated community in Inyo County and has a population of 3,879. Although a small city, Bishop and its surrounding area is the primary commercial and population center in the region and supports a total area population of roughly 14,000. Primary industries include tourism and recreation, government, and related support services. However, mining and agriculture are also important to Bishop's heritage.

Bishop is surrounded by public lands administered by the United States Bureau of Land Management and the USDA Forest Service, lands owned and administered by the City of Los Angeles, unincorporated Inyo County, and is abutted by the Bishop Paiute Reservation.

Purpose

The city is currently engaged in a comprehensive update of its General Plan. The Housing Element has been completed in accordance with the schedule mandated by the state. A Mobility Element Update is in process, and the Land Use Element is scheduled for review in the next year. To assure consistency between its land use policies and its economic development policies, the city intends to complete an Economic Development Element concurrently with the Land Use Element. The Economic Development Element must address programs that are sustainable from a long-term business perspective and reflect the strengths of the community and its values regarding protection of its unique environmental setting and community atmosphere.

The Economic Development Element will outline the basic strategy for enhancing the community's economy as well as outlining policies for implementation. It should:

1. Coordinate economic development goals with land use and mobility policies.
2. Address the recommendations of the 2011 Retail Gap Analysis.
3. Coordinate economic development policies with Inyo County and the Bishop Paiute Tribe.
4. Identify strategies and implementation programs - develop specific programs for sustainable business retention and growth, attraction of new investment, and job creation while reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The City intends to apply for a Sustainable Communities Planning Grant through the California Strategic Growth Council to fund the General Plan Update and the Economic Development Element. The objectives for the elements will have to align with the grant program objectives. Applicants generally may apply for between one hundred thousand and one million dollars. The grant will have to cover the Economic Development Element revisions and the Land Use Element Revisions. More information on this grant program can be found at the Strategic Growth Council web site www.sgc.ca.gov/planning_grants.html.

In January of 2011, a Retail Gap Analysis was prepared for the community. The Economic Development Element should build on the findings of that report. It is available on the Bishop web site at www.ca-bishop.us/Administration/RetailGapAnalysis.htm. An additional resource for background on Bishop is ABC (About the Bishop Community)/2000. This document, prepared by a citizens committee, establishes a vision for Bishop and principles for achieving that vision. It provides excellent information on the community and its issues as they existed in 1999. ABC/2000 can be found at <http://www.ca-bishop.us/Misc/ABC2000.pdf>

Tourism is a major driver of the Bishop area economy. The demand for visitor services comes from both local visitation and from travelers on U.S. 395 passing through Bishop on the way to other regional destinations. Major destinations in the region include the numerous attractions of the Inyo National Forest, Death Valley National Park, Yosemite National Park, Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, and Mammoth Mountain Ski Area.

Recreational activities in the area encompass the full gamut of outdoor pursuits including fishing, hiking, equestrian, off-highway vehicles, running, bicycling, photography, and sightseeing. In recent years, Bishop has also become an internationally renowned Mecca for rock climbing. Bishop hosts numerous events and activities throughout the year. Foremost among these are Mule Days, the Tri-County Fair, and the Millpond Music Festival.

Other regional initiatives are under way that could provide opportunities for economic expansion. Two of particular note are the Digital 395 project and expansion of the Bishop Airport. Digital 395 is a broadband “middle mile” project that will construct a fiber network along U.S. 395 from Barstow, California to Reno, Nevada, providing vastly expanded opportunities for broadband connectivity within the region. The recent procurement by Inyo County of a long-term lease for the Bishop Airport now allows for investment and improvement of facilities to permit commercial air service and to enhance general aviation. The Economic Development Element should explore the opportunities provided by these improvements and make recommendations for capitalizing on the enhanced infrastructure.

As noted above, the majority of the population in the Bishop vicinity lives outside the city limits. The Economic Development Element will have to consider and integrate with the economic development interests of the Bishop Paiute Tribe and Inyo County.

Scope

The Economic Development Element must include an analysis of existing conditions. This can build on existing studies including the Retail Gap Analysis and the Bishop Paiute Tribe Community Development and Diversification Plan.

The Economic Development Element will identify issues and opportunities, develop strategies to address opportunities, build on existing strengths, and provide program prioritization. A SWOT (Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) assessment should be included.

Guiding principles for Economic Development identified to date are:

1. Build on Bishop’s strengths, values, and interests
2. Take advantage of new technologies and opportunities
3. Integrate effectively with other regional initiatives
4. Provide diversity and stability
5. Limit or reduce greenhouse gas emissions

Strategic Approach

The Economic Development Element will provide overall strategic direction. It will provide recommendations for land use policies and programs to integrate with and direct the General Plan Update and will provide direction to City for actions to take advantage of opportunities and to reinforce existing strengths.

Project Management

The General Plan Update Process is being managed by Bauer Planning and Environmental Services (BPES). The selected economic development consultant is expected to be a sub-consultant under BPES and it is expected that BPES will coordinate the Economic Development Element process with the other components of the Update. BPES is being assisted by Taylor Consulting Services of Mammoth Lakes, California. Selection will be made cooperatively by the City of Bishop and BPES.

Proposal Requirements

All proposals must include:

- A Letter of interest signed by an authorized representative summarizing the approach and highlighting the main components of the proposal.
- An overview of the firm identifying principals and including resumes.
- Relevant experience in the areas of rural communities; recreation and tourism; agency coordination (counties, cities, federal agencies, and tribes); sustainability; broadband infrastructure, general plan preparation, and California planning laws and policies.
- Approach to services covering public outreach, interagency coordination, document preparation and delivery, and such other components as the consulting firm considers appropriate to the task.
- Analytical approach, describing data sources and collection, addressing knowledge gaps, integrating community objectives, and overall strategy.
- Budget and schedule

Submission requirements

Proposals must be submitted by December 16, 2011. Provide one electronic copy in .PDF and 5 hard copies.

Proposals shall be submitted to:

Keith Caldwell, Interim City Administrator/Planning Director
City of Bishop
377 West Line Street
Bishop, CA 93514
Phone- 760-873-5863

Consultant selection is anticipated be made in mid to late December, 2011. Expect that an interview will be required. The final contract will not be executed until after a successful award under the Sustainable Communities

Grant Program. Final terms may be modified in response to State of California grant requirements. Consultant selection will be based on the strongest overall proposal, not necessarily the lowest cost.

Questions may be directed to:

Keith Caldwell, Interim City Administrator/Planning Director
377 West Line Street
Bishop, CA 93514
Phone- 760-873-5863

Thank you for your interest.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary Kelley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "G" and "K".

For:
Keith Caldwell
Interim City Administrator