



[www.RiversideSmartCode.info](http://www.RiversideSmartCode.info)

# Riverside Smart Code Specific Plan\* RFQ

\*Including PEIR, Northside Neighborhood Vision, and Master Planning Services for 179 Acres of Vacant Property

## Responses to First Round of Questions

January 15, 2014

**Q1:** With the focus on a form-based approach, will this effort involve the transformation and translation of the existing specific plans without any changes in visions, land uses, or policies for these areas, or do you anticipate revisiting these? If the former, please clarify the purposes of the economic development, branding, and comparable tasks for areas not addressed by the Northwest Plan and the 179-acre parcel.

**Answer:** The Smart Code Specific Plan program is intended to be a community-guided effort to establish and implement a vision or set of visions for the entire project area. Although the existing specific plans may contain elements that are still relevant, each specific plan area will be revisited to establish visions and development standards reflective of current community desires. Additionally, the entire project area will be analyzed holistically to ensure a consistent and cohesive document. This will most likely result in changes in land uses and policies within these areas.

**Q2a:** Please clarify the final work products to be prepared. Other than the Northwest/Parcel plans, will the Smart Code Specific Plan be written to include the "typical" content of goals, policies, development standards, design guidelines, and implementation programs, and will the regulatory content (e.g., form-based standards) be incorporated here or adopted as a separate document?

**Q2b:** Does the City see this project as fundamentally a code-writing project, or is it a planning project to be expressed and implemented through a code?

**Answer:** It is envisioned that the Riverside Smart Code Specific Plan will include all of the minimum and "typical" sections that comprise a specific plan including the regulatory elements such as form-based development standards, permitted uses, etc. Consultants may propose an alternative to a traditional specific plan so long as the approach will result in the same outcomes desired by the City. The community vision and form-based standards are expected to be illustrated through a wide variety of clear diagrams, illustrations, and other visuals as part of the document.

The accompanying Northside Neighborhood Vision will be developed concurrently with the development of the vision for the remainder of the Smart Code project and will be integrated seamlessly into the overall Smart Code document. The Master Plan of the 179 acres of vacant land will be developed in concert with the vision for the Northside Neighborhood and will also be developed with extensive community engagement. The selected consultant team must be able to provide assistance and guidance through all aspects of developing such a document within the projected timeline.

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**Q3:** How many meetings (i.e. with staff and/or with the community/general public) are envisioned under the proposed scope of work? What types of public engagement tools and tactics have been used in the past, and which were most effective? Which were least effective? Which neighborhoods/communities respond best to which tactics (i.e., in-person meetings would work better than a social media campaign in a community where access to the internet is limited)?

**Answer:** First and foremost, community participation will be of paramount importance throughout the development of the Riverside Smart Code Specific Plan. As such, and given the significant size of the project area, combined with the constrained time within which to achieve a community-supported vision, the City will rely on the consultants' recommendations for a meaningful, inclusive, accessible, and transparent community engagement process. Consultants should not assume that the City's past community engagement approaches are or are not appropriate for this effort. As this is a new Citywide effort that will engage individuals, organizations, and agencies with diverse needs and personalities, there will be a need for extensive community meetings, as well as many internal discussions with City staff and elected officials.

The City typically conducts traditional community meetings and town hall forums utilizing a variety of multimedia presentations, informational display boards and maps to illustrate concepts and ideas, and visual preference and consensus-building sessions that utilize an electronic polling system. Effectiveness of these efforts varies based on the target population, public interest in the topic, and the City's responsiveness, perceived or observed, to the feedback received. Typically, open-house style meetings with clear and specific direction on the type of feedback desired result in favorable response rates provided that the public has ample opportunity to engage in one-on-one interaction with City staff from various departments. Due to the wide variety of socio-economic populations throughout the City, free-form public discussions tend to be the least effective as only the most vocal or outspoken individuals participate.

The City of Riverside has likely not taken full advantage of the public engagement possibilities of social media. However, the City has begun to see a positive response and success rate from an online visual preference survey as part of an evaluation of entertainment uses and amenities Downtown. Given the large college population within Riverside, the City will be looking to utilize technology and other creative solutions to engage young populations throughout the Smart Code project.

**Q4:** The RFQ mentions the need for community organizing. Is this meant to be part of the outreach effort to engage people that otherwise don't get involved in planning projects, or is there a need for something more involved?

**Answer:** The City seeks to engage as many people as possible and maintain transparency to the greatest extent possible throughout the entire process of developing the Riverside Smart Code Specific Plan to achieve the objective of a shared development vision. As noted in the response to Q3, consultants will need to conceive of a community engagement approach that results in a truly community-based, community-supported vision. Community organizing isn't meant in the traditional sense of the term; for this project it means the consultant will need to

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integrate unique and effective methods of community outreach to engage members of the Riverside community who traditionally may be less apt or able to participate in a public planning process. Consultant teams should demonstrate their ability to engage a wide variety of populations through creative methods. As stated in the RFQ, staff members that are also bilingual in Spanish and/or other languages would be of value for this project.

**Q5:** Has the City begun an effort to bring stakeholders of the individual specific plans, and other areas and agencies, into this process?

**Answer:** The City of Riverside has not begun to coordinate directly with stakeholders as part of the Smart Code Specific Plan process, although there has been communication regarding the forthcoming effort with the City Council and Planning Commission as well as key stakeholders including the Greater Riverside Chambers of Commerce and the Riverside Downtown Partnership. City staff will work closely with the selected consultant team to identify and engage stakeholders citywide, and adjacent to, the project area.

**Q6a:** Will there be two separate CEQA documents, one for the Northwest/Parcel and one for the Smart Code SP?

**Q6b:** Given that the City wants the Master Plan approved prior to the Smart Code Specific Plan project completion, does that suggest two distinct CEQA documents, as opposed to a single Program EIR?

**Answer:** Because the projects are interrelated we anticipate that there would be one programmatic environmental document. However, if there is an opportunity, justification or means to conduct separate environmental review, the City would be in favor of such in order to expedite the completion of the Master Planning of the 179 vacant acres in the Northside Neighborhood.

**Q7:** While we assume that the City envisions one (multidisciplinary) consultant team to undertake both (a) the preparation of the Smart Code Specific Plan/PEIR and (b) the preparation of the Master Plan for the vacant 179-acre site, is there a possibility that the City would split the scope across two firms/consultant teams (i.e. one firm to do (a) and another to do (b))?

**Answer:** Due to the interrelatedness of the projects and for the sake of streamlined project management, the City is seeking a multidisciplinary consultant team that can collaborate under a single scope with a primary consultant taking the lead over all facets of the concurrent, yet distinct efforts. Given the breadth and scope of this project the consultant team will need to be of a size and scope to have the capacity to accomplish this project within the timeframes and in the requisite community-based manner. Therefore, we encourage interested consultants to establish multidisciplinary partnerships prior to submitting a Statement of Qualifications.

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**Q8:** In using the term SmartCode, is the City asking for the trademarked type of form-based code by that name?

**Answer:** The City of Riverside is not specifically seeking a “SmartCode” in the formal sense, but rather a form-based code/smart code/or hybrid thereof that will clearly and accurately reflect the community-based vision(s) through the extensive use of graphics and illustrations as well as straightforward and easy to interpret development standards. The City welcomes the expertise of a consultant team that can provide recommendations for the most appropriate format for the document.

**Q9a:** Has a budget been established for the project? If so, have budget breakdowns been established for each of the project components?

**Q9b:** What budget has been allocated for the contemplated planning/development undertaking; what is the budget allocated for the consultant team's work as described in the RFQ?

**Answer:** A budget has not been established for the development and implementation of the Riverside Smart Code Specific Plan and related efforts. Consultant teams selected to participate in the Request for Proposal process shall provide an anticipated budget with realistic costs to complete all aspects of the project. The City is committed to producing a quality document that accurately reflects the community-developed vision and it is understood that the scope, scale and aggressive schedule of this effort will result in commensurate costs. To that end, the City is well aware of the significance of the potential cost for the project and is prepared to fund it.

**Q10:** As the RFQ calls for references at multiple instances (i.e. for various key team members, for team successes/relevant projects), would it be acceptable to repeat references?

**Answer:** Yes. The same individual may provide a reference for multiple members of the consultant team.

**Q11:** Are the Prime respondent as well as its subconsultants required to be registered on the City's Electronic Vendor's List, or just the Prime?

**Answer:** Only the lead or prime consultant is required to register on the City's Electronic Vendor's List for the purpose of the RFQ/RFP process. The Statement of Qualifications should clearly indicate the lead or prime consultant.

**Q12:** What is the latest existing land use data set available from the City?

**Answer:** The most current Citywide land use data was collected in 2003. Although this data set is largely still accurate for the majority of the City, and in particular the project area, there may be value in updating the data as part of this project. We welcome this as part of your proposal.

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**Q13:** Has there been any analysis conducted re: existing urban form (e.g., building footprints and heights, relationships to street frontages, parking locations, streetscape design and amenities, and so on)?

**Answer:** The City of Riverside does have building footprint data for much of the project area, although there is an opportunity to augment the existing data to include construction that may have occurred within the past three to five years. Building heights, parking locations and existing streetscape design data/inventories are not widely available within the project area, but the City maintains a multiyear set of aerial imagery, last updated in 2012, that can be used for analysis purposes. Additionally, the City prepared a parking study of the Downtown area in 2011. This study will be uploaded to the [www.RiversideSmartCode.info](http://www.RiversideSmartCode.info) website by Friday, January 17, 2014 for review purposes.

Enhancements and updates to existing data sets and inventories of various urban form elements would certainly add value to the Smart Code Specific Plan project and would be welcome during the RFP process. The Riverside Smart Code Specific Plan provides a great opportunity to develop 3-D visualizations and illustrations depicting existing and proposed urban form utilizing cutting edge software packages such as Esri CityEngine or other similar products.

**Q14:** Is there a City-wide Master Plan of Drainage and if so, what year was it produced?

**Answer:** Between 1961 and 1980, Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District prepared a series of master drainage plans within the City. These plans are available from Riverside County Flood Control via the following link:

<http://www.floodcontrol.co.riverside.ca.us/MasterPlan.aspx>

**Q15:** Is there a City-wide Master Plan of Sewer and if so, what year was it produced? We are aware of the City's Wastewater Master Plan from 2008, but that is strictly for their waste treatment plants and not the sewer collection system.

**Answer:** According the City's Public Works Department, the 2008 Wastewater Master Plan actually includes evaluation of the sewer collection system. The 2008 report consolidated and updated several sewer studies that were prepared between 2002 and 2006. The Wastewater Master Plan is available online at:

<http://www.riversideca.gov/pworks/masterplan-wastewater.asp>

Additionally, a Sewer System Management Plan is available at:

<http://www.riversideca.gov/sewer/pdf/report-collection-systems.pdf>

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**Q16:** Is there a City-wide Master Plan of Water and if so, what year was it produced?

**Answer:** Riverside Public Utilities publishes an Urban Water Master Plan every 5 years, the last being in 2010. The latest version is available online at:

<http://www.greenriverside.com/About-Green-Riverside-4/Blue-Riverside-384>