Planning RFP FAQ
University District Development Association

Period of Performance
Q: Is the timeline expressed in the RFP truly realistic/firm and why now?
A: Yes, the timeline is firm. Aspects of this project need to sync with the opening of the University District Gateway Bridge on October 3 and other work our partners—e.g. Avista Development, Spokane Transit Authority, the City of Spokane—are doing at or near the south landing of the bridge (Catalyst groundbreaking, medical shuttle launch, Sprague Avenue redevelopment) respectively.

UDDA staff and partners need to be able to communicate high-level, substantive talking points about the interim results of the planning process and the proposed implementation plan at the opening of the bridge. However, the vendor will have flexibility to finish the contracted scope of work.

That said, the vendor will not be working from "zero". Rather, the vendor will begin by updating the 2004 University District Strategic Master Plan (UDSMP); determining what is yet to be done in the UDSMP; identifying and communicating the technical and regulatory barriers to development via market analysis and 3D renderings; and reconfirming the overall vision. The UDDA does not expect a completely new Master Plan. An addendum to the original or possibly an annotated plan with summary document is sufficient.

After the October 3 bridge opening, the vendor will finalize the UDSMP update, consensus-driven vision, forecast analyses and renderings, and help scope the next phase (plan implementation).

Budget
Q: What is the budget for this planning project?
A: Once the successful vendor has been selected, negotiations will commence regarding budget and scope and a contract will be drafted. While this is not a "fee" proposal submissions that include cost estimates are welcome and vendors are encouraged to have estimates ready for discussion.

In May, the UDPDA board approved use of up to $83,333 of City funds for the *both* the planning and implementation phases of this project. No dollar amounts are allotted to each phase of work at this time. The planning phase will be resourced to ensure the key objectives are met including making the implementation phase efficient and effective.

Parties Involved, Contracting
Q: Who ultimately selects the vendor? Who will originate and sign the contract? Is the City involved in the approval process? What is the timing?

A: The CEO of the University District will select the vendor in consultation with the University District Development Association's (UDDA) Development Committee, which includes City representatives, and 2-3 external expert reviewers.

The formal contract may originate from the UDDA or from the vendor. The UDDA CEO will sign the contract after review by the UDDA Executive Committee. No other parties will approve the final contact.

The UDDA hopes to notify the successful vendor the last week in June and begin contract negotiations the first week in July with the hope of executing the final contract no later than the week of July 9th.

Q: What are your expectations regarding community involvement? Is a non-Spokane vendor an issue? Does the vendor need to have higher education campus planning/programming expertise?
A: The vendor is expected to engage, collaborate and dialogue with key community stakeholders (e.g. Avista, the City, Spokane Transit Authority, the universities, local property owners and developers, etc.) throughout the project. This will involve sharing and synthesizing data, coordinating charrette events, testing growth models and market analyses, aligning vision scenarios and communication talking points, etc.

A non-Spokane vendor is not an issue provided the above expectations can be accomplished in a timely, productive and collegial manner. The vendor need not have higher education campus planning expertise.

Project Logistics
Q: To what degree can the consultant team expect UDDA support to ensure the success of the project, e.g., stakeholder identification, meeting scheduling, etc.?
A: The UDDA staff will assist with identifying key contacts, making necessary introductions/ connections, and scheduling meeting spaces and drafting announcements on an as needed basis.

Infrastructure Assessment
Q: What level of infrastructure assessment is required? Is up-to-date data on existing conditions readily available?
A: The issue of infrastructure is primarily tied to barriers in various development scenarios. Current infrastructure, studies and findings regarding future infrastructure needs, scientific findings regarding soils and topography, as well as any other available and useful information will be shared with a contracted vendor. While, there is significant and current data available the final product should primarily focus on identifying where infrastructure, its timing, or regulation regarding infrastructure would create barriers to development or a specific development scenario.

Sub-Contractors
Q: Should the vendor identify subconsultants in the proposal response? Can or will you recommend any local firms as subcontractors?
A: We cannot recommend any firm over another, but please do list any members of your team (sub-contractors included and identified as such) that illustrate the depth and breadth of your expertise as it relates to the RFP scope. Note that your team members will need to work with our community partners so it is imperative that you select individuals and firms with not only know-how but also proven interpersonal, facilitation and coordination skills.

Outcomes and Key Elements
Q: Is the intent to develop a graphically illustrated brochure or digital brochure for web use? Is a pre-determined, select stakeholder user group identified as part of this update process?
A: The intent is to create visual renderings of forecast scenarios for development demand. Key users will be City planning staff, elected officials, business owners/leaders, institutional partners, and community members. While collaterals do not need to be exceptionally specific for each group they should help representatives from all better understand the tradeoffs and opportunities. Each key concept or scenario should be visually represented to ensure that City and UDDA staff can both show and tell the story in ways appropriate to diverse and various audiences.

Q: If the City is taking the lead on the South Sub Area Plan, how much time and effort should vendor dedicate to this key element?
A: For the purposes of this contract the vendor should limit their compensated efforts to identifying specific and general barriers; especially regulatory barriers. If the City wishes to contract with a vendor for elements of the South Sub Area Plan that would be a separate contract. This contract would expect the vendor to be appropriately responsive to the City's questions in the final presentation of the final product.

Q: What level of detail is expected for each scenario and focus area? Is a high-level urban massing model (showing built and non-built development areas) using Sketch-Up as a tool sufficient for this effort? Will an economic forecasted projection (20-year horizon) be needed to inform each development scenario?
A: The critical element is to translate the broader vision for the District into a preferred development scenario for each focus area based on the community growth assumptions and factors that will be developed during stakeholder engagement tasks and to develop numeric projections and modeling that represent the corresponding growth potential. The proposal should express the consultant's ideas and approach to this task and what tools and graphics might best be used to represent the outcomes to community stakeholders. The outcomes will inform subsequent sub-area planning work geared toward identifying and removing obstacles and barriers to achieving the desired vision.

Q: Can you clarify what you are needing in terms of a model for this update effort? Does the City or UDPDA have a current up-to-date 3D digital Sketch-Up model of the area under study?

A: There is no set quantity or type of images needed or expected. The proposal should outline the consultant's understanding of the tasks and express their ideas for and capabilities to incorporate graphic representations and/or images to help stakeholders easily comprehend the project's findings, growth potential, and critical barriers or alternatives. The final product will need to work online/electronically as well as in person with printed posters.

Q: What are the most important outcomes needed for this update?

A: Most important outcomes are: an updated UDSMP; summary talking points regarding consensus-driven vision; an accurate market analysis model and visual renderings of forecast scenarios of (optimistic, neutral, pessimistic) development demand; yield studies and capacities to back-up the forecast scenarios; identification of technical and regulatory barriers; recommendations regarding development sequencing; and suggestions for next phase implementation.