



FALL  
2017

*Culver*  
**CITY**  
**GENERAL  
PLAN  
UPDATE**

Request for Qualifications









# City of Culver City General Plan Update Request for Qualifications

**Due date:** TBD

**Format:** 6 hardcopies + 1 electronic

**Timeline:**

RFQ phase-summer 2017

RFP phase-fall 2017

Selection-spring 2018

**Questions:**

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The City of Culver City is issuing this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for its General Plan update. A shortlist of qualified RFQ respondents will be issued a Request for Proposals. The selected consultant will commence work in early 2018.

## Introduction

Culver City is an independent city of nearly 40,000 residents and over 46,000 workers, located strategically on the Westside of the central Los Angeles metropolitan region. The City of Culver City ("City") is in the early stages of structuring a process to comprehensively update its General Plan so that its elements (dating from 1968 to 2014) reflect the community's conditions today and to determine a vision for future generations.

The General Plan update process will be a collaborative multi-year effort between the City's many engaged and invested stakeholders, City decision makers and staff, and a creative and highly skilled consulting team.

The City Council is issuing this RFQ to solicit interested firms from a range of disciplines to submit Qualification Statements prior to issuing a Request for Proposals ("RFP") later this year. The RFQ describes the City's goals and requirements for the General Plan update and allows the City to tailor a shortlist of consultants with which to engage for the next stage of evaluation, the proposal phase.

The submission requirements and evaluation criteria, detailed herein, will be used to construct a shortlist of consultants who will have the opportunity to respond to the RFP once issued. The City has embraced flexibility in this RFQ to encourage respondents to submit materials that they believe highlight their firms' strongest qualifications, display their creative capacities, and provide space for open expression of approaches to teaming, public engagement, and planning.

## Context and background

### Yesterday: strategic location for creative production

Culver City was founded in 1917 at the junction of major transportation routes between downtown Los Angeles and the Pacific. As a center for creative industry production, the city boasting three major motion picture studios by the mid-1920s.

Creative work and the transportation network remain central in the city's economic and social life - reinforced by the enduring presence of film production, bolstered by a new generation of technology and creative firms, and enriched by new investments in Metro Rail and other infrastructure that continue to bring energy to the community.

### Today: high quality of life

Culver City continues to be a highly desirable residential location due to its excellent regional connectivity via the Metro Expo Line and major roadways, its attractive setting near the base of the Baldwin Hills, and its proximity to the beach. The city's outstanding cultural life, excellent public services, and unique sense of place further contribute to the high quality of life for which the community is known.

Culver City's strategic location, its creative industry and business clusters, and major quality of life assets have provided a base for significant development and investment. Through its redevelopment programs, the City has realized a series of private development and public realm projects that have attracted further private investment. These efforts have resulted in new opportunities to live and work in Culver City and helped ensure the community's continued prosperity.

### Tomorrow: real challenges, significant opportunity

While the city's strategic advantages have resulted in sustained public and private investment, those advantages also present challenges. For example, decades of regional underinvestment in mobility infrastructure have resulted in challenges for all users who move around and through the city. Similarly, the economic success of the city and the Westside have created unprecedented residential demand that has accelerated housing costs, limiting access to housing for many and exacerbating mobility challenges in the region.

The General Plan update is intended to address these challenges while supporting and strengthening the best qualities of the city. The City and the consultant team will begin this work with an engagement program that brings the broadest possible public and stakeholder participation into the process. The City is committed to creating public ownership of the plan and the long-term vision for Culver City's future.

## Conceptual work program

### General Plan

The City envisions the General Plan to be updated in a way that that is easily understood by non-technical stakeholders and provides guidance for everyday and long-term action. In addition to a comprehensive update of all State-mandated General Plan elements, the City is considering a range of optional topics to address matters relevant to Culver City.

The City is interested in exploring innovative means of structuring and delivering the General Plan to best reflect the City's aspirations for the coming decades and to achieve maximum usability.

### Existing and required elements

The City will be comprehensively updating all existing elements of the General Plan, in accordance with requirements of the State of California and with the anticipated updated Office of Planning and Research General Plan Guidelines.

A number of elements have been updated over the years, notably in the 2000's, but most of the elements were generally prepared in the 1990s or earlier and most are considered out-of-date and inadequate to meet today's needs.


Year	Element
2014	Housing
2004	Land Use
2004	Circulation
2004	Open Space
1996	Noise
1975	Public Safety
1974	Seismic Safety
1973	Conservation
1968	Recreation <i>*existing optional element</i>

## Optional elements and other topics

The comprehensive update will incorporate additional elements identified by the Council and stakeholders and may include:

- Urban design and public places
- Sustainability
- Healthy communities and quality of life
- Economy
- Ballona Creek (water quality and public use)
- Parking
- Cultural planning
- Equity and social justice
- Governance (including regional agency and nonprofit coordination)

A well-qualified respondent will demonstrate expertise in many or all of these areas through its team composition and the range of project experience.



A good city is like a good party; people stay longer than really necessary because they are enjoying themselves. —Jan Gehl

## Environmental and technical analysis

Environmental analysis of the General Plan update will be required to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Respondents must demonstrate capacity to provide full-service CEQA and technical analysis services, including but not limited to CEQA documentation for project approval and air quality, greenhouse gas, noise, and traffic impact analyses.

## Required disciplines

To maintain flexibility and encourage creative responses reflecting each team's unique strengths, the City welcomes respondents' ideas of how they might best structure an effective group of creative and technical experts in-house or on a collaborative team. The City reserves the right to assemble teams that best suit project needs and consultant capabilities. The following list illustrates the expertise this project will likely require. The City invites individual respondents representing any one area of expertise as well as teams comprised of several:

- A **public engagement expert** with expertise in leading innovative outreach processes resulting in broad participation that lead to long-term community ownership
- A **design-focused planning firm** with expertise in innovative approaches to planning, effectively leading communities through change, and robust mapping capabilities
- An **urban designer** with expertise in placemaking and public space programming
- A **parking expert** with expertise in analytics, policy innovation, and emerging technologies
- A **transportation/mobility planner** with expertise in innovation that enhances mobility and safety for all users at all life stages and with expertise in creating and implementing a VMT-based traffic model, preferably in the LA region
- An **economic advisor** with expertise in guiding local cities toward a healthy economic future through policies, projects, and programs that address best practices in economic development
- A **cultural/arts advisor** with expertise in strengthening creative economies through projects and policy
- An **environmental consultant** with expertise in CEQA and technical analyses

- A **sustainability consultant** with expertise in identifying measures to achieve long-term environmental, fiscal, and equity objectives
- A **web designer** with expertise in creating and managing websites used to gather and share information throughout the process

### Values to consider

Well-qualified respondents will address the following values across all disciplines, whether responding individually or as part of a team:

- Experience leading communities through change
- A commitment to deep, inclusive, sustained engagement
- An orientation toward planning places for all users at all life stages
- A track record of creativity and innovation
- A holistic approach that recognizes interdependencies among planning topics
- A high degree of team integration and an interdisciplinary approach
- Experience communicating public realm ideas and planning concepts to nontechnical audiences through easily understood schematics and imagery
- Strong capacity for digital communication, including building and managing interactive online platforms for stakeholder engagement and information sharing

## Submission requirements and evaluation

### Contents

Please include the following information in your response to this RFQ:

**Cover letter.** Introduce the responding firm(s) and summarize general qualifications and interest in the General Plan update project. Identify a single point of contact for your response; if responding as part of a team, identify all participants and roles or disciplines as applicable.

**Firm qualifications.** Provide the following detail for each participating firm:

#### *Description*

Describe each participating firm and its qualifications for providing the specific consulting services outlined in this RFQ. Include information relating to the philosophy and general approach to the work to be performed. Confirm the firm's ability to allocate resources effectively as needed to meet the project schedule and needs for the approximately three-year period of 2018-2021.

#### *Project list*

For each participating firm, list and describe project experience that is similar in size and scope, or otherwise related to, the General Plan update. Include details on the time frame, major milestones, and other background information that will help us establish relevance. Explain the specific contribution each firm made to the project, and provide project imagery and/or links to online content as available.

**Staff qualifications.** Provide the following detail for staff from each participating firm:

- A resume for project manager and key staff with whom the City will interact.
- Identification of a project manager and anyone else who will interact with City staff.
- Availability of key personnel to undertake work through the next few years.

**Critical review of existing plan.** For each response, review and provide a brief critical commentary on one of the following existing Culver City General Plan documents: Housing (2014), Circulation (2004), or Land Use (2004). Comment on how the element might be updated to address current best practices in policy, state-of-the-art interactive Plan delivery, and better guidance and transparency to both the public and City decision-makers. We invite any additional critical commentary that helps us assess your firm's understanding, approach, or philosophy.

**References.** Provide at least three references for responding firm(s) from past clients for whom similar work has been completed on time and within budget. The City may, at its discretion, request additional references from participating firms or consultants to establish a history of effective communication with clients and client satisfaction.

**Fee schedule.** Detail reasonable hourly billing rates for each participating entity for services to be performed.

### **Format**

Please submit six (6) bound copies, and one (1) USB drive of PDF and other electronic content, at your earliest convenience - but no later than ***DUE DATE + TIME***, to:

Ashley Hefner, AICP, Advance Planning Manager  
Community Development Department  
City of Culver City  
9770 Culver Boulevard  
Culver City, CA 90232

### **Evaluation and selection**

City Council and staff intend to develop a shortlist of potential consultants, based on the highest scoring submittals to the RFQ, to proceed to the RFP phase by invitation. Qualifications received in response to the RFQ will be assessed and scored based on the following percentages:

- 35% Firm qualifications
- 35% Staff qualifications
- 20% Critical review
- 10% Fee schedule

References will be evaluated on a pass-or-fail basis; firms receiving unsatisfactory review from third-party references will be disqualified. The proposal phase is likely to include review and evaluation of written proposals as well as interviews with consultant teams. The City is currently exploring the possibility including a practical component for this phase, such as a workshop or case study exercise, to assess how teams function internally and collaborate with City staff. The best qualified consultant(s) will be recommended to the City Council for selection and award of a contract for services.

### **Tentative Timeline**

RFQ approve/issue/submit	summer 2017
RFP approve/issue/submit	fall 2017
Interviews/meetings	winter 2017
Selection/kick off	spring 2018

### **Questions?**

If you have any questions during preparation of your response materials, please contact Ashley Hefner, Advance Planning Manager, by e-mail at [ashley.hefner@culvercity.org](mailto:ashley.hefner@culvercity.org).



