

**May 10, 2023**

**5H. Approval of Request for Proposals (RFP) #23-0365  
Forward Pinellas Planning Support Services Consultants  
Selection**

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**SUMMARY**

In February, the Forward Pinellas board approved the release of RFP #23-0365 Forward Pinellas Planning Support Services. The consultant solicitation was released later that month and 17 proposals were received. An evaluation committee of Chelsea Favero (Forward Pinellas), Jared Austin (Forward Pinellas), Marcie Stenmark (City of Safety Harbor), Christina Mendoza (Forward Pinellas) and Joan Rice (Pinellas County) met to review the proposals and score the firms. A subsequent meeting was held with Forward Pinellas staff who decided to recommend the top 9 firms to ensure a broad array of skills and experience over the potential seven years of the contracts. Selected firms will be available to all local governments for their own assignments as well as for grants awarded to local agencies by Forward Pinellas.

Following the evaluation committee meeting, Forward Pinellas staff reached out to references for the recommended firms and received no concerning comments. Following board approval to move forward with the top 9 firms, staff will begin negotiating agreements with the firms and bring the agreements back to the Forward Pinellas Board for approval in September.

**ATTACHMENT(S):** Memo

**ACTION:** Board to approve selecting the top 9 firms from the Forward Pinellas Planning Support Services Consultants procurement to proceed with agreement negotiations.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends that the board approve selecting the top 9 firms from the Forward Pinellas Planning Support Services Consultants procurement to proceed with agreement negotiations.



**MEMORANDUM**  
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**THE PLANNING COUNCIL AND METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION FOR PINELLAS COUNTY**

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**TO:** Forward Pinellas Board  
Whit Blanton, FAICP, Executive Director

**FROM:** Rodney Chatman, AICP, Planning Division Manager

**DATE:** April 26, 2023

**SUBJECT:** Request for Proposals (RFP) #23-0365 Forward Pinellas Planning Support Services Summary

In February, the Forward Pinellas Board approved the release of RFP #23-0365 Planning Support Services. Proposals were due on March 23, 2023, by 3 p.m. and a total of 17 proposals were received by the due date and time.

All meetings related to this procurement were held virtually and notice was provided online and also provided through the OpenGov software platform. Members of the public were welcome to attend all meetings.

An evaluation committee of Chelsea Favero (Forward Pinellas), Jared Austin (Forward Pinellas), Marcie Stenmark (City of Safety Harbor), Christina Mendoza (Forward Pinellas) and Joan Rice (Pinellas County) met to review the proposals and score the firms. A subsequent meeting was held with Forward Pinellas staff who decided to recommend the top 9 firms to ensure a broad array of skills and experience over the potential seven years of the contracts. Selected firms will be available to all local governments for their own assignments as well as for grants awarded to local agencies by Forward Pinellas.

After the May 10, 2023 Forward Pinellas Board meeting, staff will begin to negotiate agreements and pricing with the selected firms. Once agreements are in place, Forward Pinellas and local governments may use the firms for planning work.

The following is a summary of the selection committee discussion on each firm. The table at the end notes the final scores and firms that are recommended for selection. Staff has checked with references for each of the firms recommended for selection and found no concerns.

- **AECOM Technical Services.** Good organization chart and demonstrated experience working with sub-consultants on previous projects. Team has a very experienced project manager and deputy project manager. Proposal included an effective graphic which linked the team's experience to the eight sub-areas. Proposal provided extensive discussion on schedule and budget controls. Good understanding of each sub-area and included sub-consultants with extensive land use experience. Proposal included staff availability by each sub-task and highlighted an interesting use of unique technology (360-degree camera technology).
- **Alliance Transportation Group.** Strong focus on engineering and modeling. The organization chart was provided by firm and not by sub-area. Proposal does not reflect prior experience working as a consultant team. Project Manager has 9 years of experience and some of the sub-consultants could serve in a lead capacity. Proposal used old photos of Pinellas County. Proposal did not discuss any redevelopment projects or experience. Land use planning and economic development experience was lacking. Urban design group needed an architect or landscape architect. Budget information was missing from the relevant project cut-sheets. Did not provide an adequate explanation of the sub-areas.
- **Ayers Associates Inc.** Nationwide firm with a Tampa office. Proposal did not show any sub-consultants. Proposal needed to have subject-matter experts with expertise in the sub-areas. Land use and website design experience was very limited. Wording of the proposal was not aligned with the RFP's needs. Firm has relevant experience with projects on a "smaller-scale." No information was provided on past relevant project timeframes or budgets.
- **Benesch.** Great organization chart that showed a lot of back up capacity. Proposal included staff availability. Good use of sub-consultants with focused areas of expertise. Proposal noted experienced with various software platforms. All the projects listed were within the past 5 years and the budgets showed projects at various scales. Proposal highlighted all of the sub-areas and included a solid understanding of the sub-areas, including mobility fees. Proposal included good discussion of regulations, statutory framework, commute times, and the resurgence of small downtowns.
- **Burgess & Niple, Inc.** Solid list of staff which included their years of experience with the firm. Proposal did not include any sub-consultants and they noted the sub-areas they could not fulfill. Project Manager seems to be called upon to do a lot. Urban design group was led by a PE and not an architect or landscape architect. Project Manager does not have any MPO experience. All the relevant experience was in engineering and not planning. Listed projects are exclusively transportation and not land use or economic development. Proposal included one page to explain the "understanding" section and was inadequate with no Pinellas County context.

- **Fehr & Peers.** Organization chart lists all the sub-consultants by sub-area. Project Manager has over 20 years of experience including working for Forward Pinellas on various projects. Proposal highlighted past experience working with their subs. Proposal shows a good mix of staff by sub-area. Proposal touched on affordable housing, Vision Zero, and affordable housing. Good discussion on the use of innovative technology.
- **GAI Consultants.** Organization of the team was unclear. Project Manager has a good mix of experience. Good table with a list of projects by sub-area. Good project chart but no project budget information. Proposal provided a detailed overview of each sub-area and how they would address our needs. Good discussion of outreach and engagement and a heavy emphasis on adaptation and coastal resilience experience.
- **Gannett Fleming, Inc.** Proposal was very transportation-analysis and engineering focused. No focus on economic analysis. Good staff chart by sub-area. Urban design group had a lot of depth. Good local relevant MPO experience. Land use experience was not relevant. All projects were within the last 5 years. Proposal needed more detail and explanation of each sub-area. Transportation sub-area was good but other sub-areas were lacking.
- **HDR Engineering, Inc.** Project Manager has 35 years of experience. Proposal included a good organization chart with leads for each sub-area. Firms have prior experience working together. Proposal demonstrated a good understanding of the sub-areas. It was difficult to determine which staff members worked on the relevant projects. Proposal included all the required budget information and timelines. Proposal should have identified which firms would be involved in each of the sub-areas. Proposal included a detailed discussion of each of the sub-areas.
- **Inspire Placemaking Collective.** Good relevant experience and support staff. Website design and maintenance experience was lacking. Proposal included a good overview of Forward Pinellas and our needs. Proposal could have been better organized. Firm lacks depth.
- **Kimley-Horn and Associates.** Strong Project Manager and deputy Project Manager. Proposal included all of the support staff. Proposal includes a diverse group of sub-consultants. Proposal showed a lot of depth. Proposal was easy to follow. Highlighted the linkage between transportation, land use, and data and provided various relevant projects.
- **Kittelson & Associates, Inc.** Proposal highlighted the Safe Street and Roads for All grant award. Project Manager and deputy Project Manager are very experienced. Half of the leads are the sub-consultants. Percentage availability chart was good. Proposal gave a good breakdown of projects and the roles of staff. Would have liked to see more land use experience. No budget data was provided on the project cut-sheets. Proposal referenced MPO core products but was light on land use projects. Good guidebook and policy references.
- **Madrid CPWG.** Interesting mix of small firms. Team included one AICP planner, 5 other planners, and the rest of the staff are Pes. Proposal highlights multimodal transportation but very little land use. Typo on the cover letter. Relevant projects were not related to the sub-areas. Proposal included a general-civil contract that was not related to planning

services. Proposal was difficult to follow and it was unclear who would be the project manager for each sub-area. Proposal did not include very many maps or graphics to tell the story.

- **Pritchett Steinbeck Group, Inc.** Proposal focused on collaboration and supporting our ongoing work. Organization chart was very thorough by sub-area. Proposal was well-organized and included extra staff and their specialties. 18 relevant projects highlighting the key staff. Proposal did not include the costs of the relevant projects. Proposal included a good map showing relevant MPO experience throughout the southeast. Thorough narrative describing their understanding of our needs.
- **Renaissance Planning.** Good local presence. Extensive relevant project experience. Good alignment of staff to the required sub-areas. Great-looking proposal that was well-organized. Proposal included the firms but not the people that worked on the relevant projects. Proposal included a detailed breakdown of the sub-areas. Firm is not very deep in a couple of the sub-areas.
- **Toole Design Group, LLC.** Team includes 4 sub-consultants. Project Manager has 16 years of experience. Proposal included a good organization chart with a lot of transportation planning depth. Not a lot of depth in the other sub-areas. No MPO experience but a good mix of relevant projects. Proposal could have used more graphics. Proposal was not tailored to Pinellas County's needs.
- **WSP USA, Inc.** Good organization chart with a breakdown by sub-area. Proposal included experienced sub-consultants that demonstrated good staff depth across all sub-areas. Good critical staff resources chart and provided all the required budget and timeframe information. Proposal showed a lot of TOD experience to include Forward Pinellas project experience. Proposal used a tailored-approach to each sub-area and included a reference to the SPOTlight Emphasis Areas. Proposal included a thorough land use discussion.

| <b>Company Name</b>                  | <b>Point Total</b> | <b>Ranking</b> |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Fehr & Peers*                        | 4483.75            | 1              |
| Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.*    | 4483.75            | 1              |
| WSP USA Inc.*                        | 4467.50            | 2              |
| Benesch*                             | 4416.25            | 3              |
| AECOM Technical Services, Inc.*      | 4398.75            | 4              |
| Pritchett Steinbeck Group Inc.*      | 4271.25            | 5              |
| Kittelsohn & Associates, Inc.*       | 4171.25            | 6              |
| HDR Engineering, Inc.*               | 4150.00            | 7              |
| Renaissance Planning*                | 4081.25            | 8              |
| Toole Design Group, LLC              | 3886.25            | 9              |
| Inspire Placemaking Collective, Inc. | 3865.00            | 10             |
| Gannett Fleming, Inc.                | 3832.50            | 11             |
| GAI Consultants                      | 3815.00            | 12             |
| Alliance Transportation Group        | 3615.00            | 13             |
| Burgess & Niple, Inc.                | 3550.00            | 14             |
| Ayres Associates Inc.                | 3533.75            | 15             |
| Madrid CPWG                          | 3517.50            | 16             |

\* Recommended firm