



## Legislation Text

File #: Pres 20-365, Version: 1

### Environmental Consulting Services - City Council Interviews

**Summary and Background Information:** Commerce City, like many local governments, recognizes that actions at the local level matter for the immediate and long-term health impacts of the community, and efforts made at the local level can contribute significantly at a regional level, as it pertains to health, safety, and environmental outcomes. In this rapidly changing world with concerns about economic growth and equity, energy use, climate change, social well-being and health, and waste reduction, it is important for Commerce City to address these contemporary challenges as the city continues to grow. The industrial history of the city has made the community even more aware of the environment and the consequences of unsustainable practices related to pollution, waste, transportation, and land use, and this has been reflected in a number of unrelated public engagement efforts that have occurred over the last year.

On October 2, 2020, the City released RFP #CD-02-2020, for Environmental Consulting Services to be provided to the city. The City received a total of seven (7) proposals prior to the application window closing at 5:00PM Mountain Time on October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020. The following firms provided responses to the RFP request:

- Boulder A.I.R, LLC <<https://bouldair.com/>>
- EGC <<https://www.egcincpro.com/>>
- Group 14 Engineering <<https://www.group14eng.com/our-story/>>, [Pinyon Environmental](#) <<https://pinyon-env.net/about.html>>, [Biohabitats](#) <<https://www.biohabitats.com/>> & [ICLEI](#) <<https://www.iclei.org/>>
- Lotus Engineering & Sustainability <<http://www.lotussustainability.com/>>, [Pinyon Environmental](#) <<https://pinyon-env.net/about.html>>, and [AMBG Consulting](#) <<https://www.ambgconsulting.com/about-us>>
- PG Environmental <<http://www.pgenv.com/>> & [Eastern Research Group, Inc](#) <<http://www.erg.com/>>
- Ramboll <<https://ramboll.com/who-we-are/>>, [NORESCO](#) <<https://www.noresco.com/about/>>, [TD Environmental](#) <<http://tdenviro.com/about/>>, [Aquinox](#) <<http://www.aquinox.com/about/>>, and [Wellstone Collaborative Strategies](#) <<https://www.wellstonestrategies.com/about/>>
- Spirit Environmental <<https://spiritenv.com/who-we-are/>>, [Air Resource Specialists](#) <<https://www.air-resource.com/>>, and [Wright Water Engineers](#) <<https://www.wrightwater.com/>>

The request was fairly broad and comprehensive in nature, asking respondents to outline their proposed approach to deliver the following services:

1. Environmental Policy Development - External community-wide policy and land use strategies
2. Environmental Policy Development - City Functions and Operations

3. Air Quality Monitoring and Policy Recommendation Services
4. Water Quality Monitoring and Policy Recommendation Services

The request also asked respondents to outline a detailed and robust plan for engaging the community regarding the four main project categories. This includes detailing exactly how members of the public, community organizations, non-profits, and special districts are to be involved, what specific strategies are proposed to engage environmental justice, low income, and disproportionately impacted communities, and what formats would be pursued to realize such outcomes.

Following the closing of the application period, a panel consisting of staff from Community Development, Parks Recreation & Golf, Public Works, and the City Manager's Office evaluated all proposals received, and invited three (3) proposals forward for interviews with city staff. The decision to move proposals forward was based on the following criteria:

- A firm's adequate demonstration of being able to perform the services requested in the RFP Scope
- Demonstration of a clear and organized approach to performing the services requested in the RFP
- Demonstration of regionally relevant work product related to the scope items requested in the RFP Scope

Applications that did not meet the three criteria above were not selected to move forward to interviews. Based on the interviews that were conducted with staff during the week of November 16, the staff panel felt that both Spirit Environmental and Lotus Engineering & Sustainability proposals most adequately met the evaluation criteria, and were selected to move forward to final interviews with City Council.

The first proposal consists of a project team including Lotus Engineering & Sustainability as the lead firm, with Pinyon Environmental and AMBG providing support as sub consultants. Lotus is also a local Denver-based firm that has previously worked on Denver's 80x50 Climate Action Plan, Erie's Sustainability Master Plan, and conducted a GHG inventory for Las Cruces, NM. Several of the staff with Lotus have significant experience working for local governments in the area, and understand the mechanics of local government environmental efforts, as well as the relation to state efforts that are currently in process. This proposal also highlighted a clear, concise, and thoughtful approach to addressing the scope items, including breaking the project into multiple phases throughout 2021. The initial phases would focus on developing a vision of organizational sustainability as well as interviews with key city staff and stakeholders early in the process. With the assistance of AMBG consulting, this proposal also placed a strong emphasis on community engagement as a component of this process, and highlighted approaches to reach key stakeholders and environmental justice communities.

The second proposal consists of a project team including Spirit Environmental as the lead firm, with Air Resource Specialists and Wright Water Engineers providing support as sub consultants. Spirit Environmental is a local firm that has actively worked on a number of local sustainability efforts in Jefferson County, Arvada, Wheat Ridge, and Westminster, and is currently working with Adams County to complete the sustainability component of their Comprehensive Plan update. The project team also is familiar with a number of state planning efforts, including the Colorado Climate Plan, the Colorado EV plan, and the Colorado GHG Reduction Roadmap. The staff panel felt that this proposal laid out a comprehensive and holistic approach to the items in the scope. They placed an emphasis

on a community engagement process that occurs early on and throughout the process and is tied to the overall objectives, comprehensively includes all topic areas discussed within the scope of services, and a strong emphasis on air quality policy recommendation services with the assistance provided by ARS (Air Resource Specialists). Wright Water Engineers, who would assist with the Water Quality Policy services, has previously provided assistance to the City in the form of updating the City's Storm Drainage Design and Technical Criteria Manual.

Overall, the staff panel felt that both Spirit Environmental and Lotus Engineering & Sustainability's proposals demonstrated adequate ability to fulfil the items requested within the scope of work, and demonstrated work product completed in the region that is relevant to many items within the request. They provided reasonable cost estimates to deliver such services compared to the allocated budget amount, and highlighted creative and unique approaches to delivering the scope items.

The format for the two interviews are intended to consist of a 20-minute presentation by each project team, followed by 20 minutes for questions by City Council. Once the process is complete, staff will work with the successful respondent on executing a contract to commence work in Q1 2021.

**Staff Responsible (Department Head):** Jason Rogers, AICP, Community Development Director

**Staff Member Presenting:** Domenic Martinelli, AICP, LEED AP ND, Environmental Planner

**Outside Presenter(s):**

- Proposal 1: Lotus Engineering & Sustainability, Pinyon Environmental, and AMBG Consulting
- Proposal 2: Spirit Environmental, Air Resource Specialists, and Wright Water Engineers

**Financial Impact:** \$225,000 (estimated)

**Funding Source:** General Fund

**Staff Recommendation:** N/A