



To: City of Dripping Springs Mayor & City Council
From: Howard J. Koontz, AICP – Planning Director
Date: Tuesday, January 18, 2022
RE: Comprehensive Plan and Code Rewrite Consultant

I. Background narrative

In 2021, the Dripping Springs City Council authorized the commission of a new, 25-year Comprehensive Plan and an associated code re-write. The project was appropriated in the FY21-22 budget, and staff was directed to craft and issue a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) in October.

The RFQ was made public in the last week of October, and responses were due back to staff by the first Friday in December of last year. The city received five total responses to the RFQ, all of which were qualified as complete and compliant to the RFQ text.

A selection committee of staff and planning commissioners was formed, and that group met on December 27th to discuss as a group the product of their individual review of the responses, and their observations. After that meeting, the group defined a clear preference for two of the consultant candidates. Staff immediately invited them to interview, in-person, for a second-round discussion with the selection group.

Following those two interviews, one with DTJ (*multiple locations, notably Boulder, CO/Dallas, TX/Austin, TX*) and the other with Freese and Nichols (*again, multiple locations but the hopeful project manager is listed as working from their San Marcos, TX location*), staff recommends that the city negotiate a task order with **DTJ Design**, project managed by Francois de Kock, and his team of staff and 3rd party collaborators for Dripping Springs' 2045 Comprehensive Plan.

The selection group recommends selection of DTJ because the selection committee felt that DTJ would be the most effective asset to the city. The group recognized that DTJ had focused their effort and tailored their response individually to the City of Dripping Springs. Of the persons who participated on the calls, DTJ included all but one of their practitioners listed in their RFQ response. The selection group felt that the communication style and rapport presented by DTJ would be best at collaborating with the city team. The consultant team made the best connection with the overall project management scheme expected by the city. The selection committee also was impressed by the amount of work and thought regarding Dripping Springs specifically that DTJ had already engaged in. The selection committee also appreciated the professionalism and prior experience of Freese and Nichols, but would recommend selection of DTJ.

II. Action item

For this item, staff seeks direction from the Council that would permit negotiations between the preferred candidate and city leadership to create and execute a task order to complete the Comprehensive Plan document, and an associated code re-write not limited to the zoning ordinance and site- and subdivision regulations. Staff would also recommend that a second candidate be chosen in case negotiations with the preferred candidate are unsuccessful.