



BOARD OF COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS



TOWN
COUNCIL

JOINT INFORMATION MEETING AGENDA DOCUMENTATION

SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT: Jackson/Teton County

PRESENTER: Tyler Sinclair & Chris Neubecker

MEETING DATE: May 3, 2021

SUBJECT: Housing Nexus Study, Regional Housing Needs Assessment Consultant Selection

STATEMENT/PURPOSE

The Teton County Board of County Commissioners (“Board”) and Jackson Town Council (“Council”) will consider selecting a consultant for a Housing Nexus Study and Regional Housing Needs Assessment. Once complete, these studies will provide 1) the legal nexus for the housing mitigation program and 2) an analysis of the current and future workforce housing needs for the region (Teton County, Wyoming; Teton County, Idaho; and Northern Lincoln County, WY).

BACKGROUND/ALTERNATIVES

On January 28, 2020, the Board and Council approved a previous RFQ for a consultant to conduct a new Housing Nexus Study ([staff report here](#)). The purpose of this study was to update the 2013 Housing Nexus Study and provide accurate data about employee generation in Teton County. As discussed at prior Joint Information Meetings, this study will not mandate specific mitigation rates. Instead, it will provide data about the number of employees generated by new business and residential development, total employment rates by job sector, and outline the maximum, legally defensible limits of any mitigation program.

Following staff recommendation, a technical stakeholder group was formed to provide comments and consultation to inform staff’s recommendations throughout the Nexus Study. The RFQ was released January 29, 2020 and three entities responded: Raftelis, Clarion Associates, and Place Dynamics.

The Housing Nexus Study was presented to the Board and Council on May 4, 2020 ([staff report here](#)). At that time, the Board and Council continued the item considering the COVID-19 pandemic and its unknown effects on each entity’s budget.

On November 2, 2020, the Board and Council directed staff to bring the item back at a future meeting. In the interim the Board and Council have both approved a reduction in housing mitigation fees.

On February 1, 2021 ([staff report here](#)), the Board and Council discussed options for moving the Housing Nexus Study forward. At this meeting, the Board and Council directed staff to include a regional housing needs assessment component to the scope for the RFQ. The needs assessment will provide information about how much and what types of housing are needed today and will be needed for the next several years to meet the community’s housing goals and will also provide this information for our “commuter-shed” communities: Teton County, Idaho and Northern Lincoln County, Wyoming.

On March 1, 2021 ([staff report here](#)), the Board and Council approved the RFQ for the Housing Nexus Study and Regional Housing Needs Assessment. The RFQ was released March 2, 2021 and three responses to the RFQ were received by the deadline, April 2, 2021.

After initial review, the Housing Director removed herself from the selection team due to a conflict of interest. As in 2020, a technical stakeholder group reviewed the responses and then met with staff to discuss the responses and consider a recommendation.

Technical Stakeholders:

- Laura Bonich, Housing Supply Board
- Tyler Davis, JH Working
- Matt Faupel, Local Realtor
- Elizabeth Hutchings, Shelter JH
- Steven Johnson, Lincoln County Planning Director
- Anna Olson, JH Chamber of Commerce
- Hallie Poirier Teton County (ID) Housing Authority
- Greg Rafert, Local Economist
- Brooke Sausser, JH Conservation Alliance
- Anne Schuler, Town Planning Commission
- Devon Viehman, County Planning Commission

Staff Participants:

- Paul Anthony, Town Planning Director
- Ryan Hostetter, County Principal Long Range Planner
- Chris Neubecker, County Planning Director

Tyler Sinclair, Town of Jackson Community Development Director facilitated the discussion.

During the initial technical stakeholder meeting, proposals were scored based upon preliminary criteria and the group discussed the pros and cons of each proposal. Based upon this initial scoring and discussion the group removed one team from consideration (Strategic Economics) and invited two teams back for interviews: Clarion Associates and WSW Consulting. Interviews were conducted over a two-day period, April 15 and 16, 2021.

As part of the interview process each firm was provided a series of follow up questions developed through the initial discussion and review stage for conversation during the interviews. Each team provided a written response to these questions which have been attached to this report for review and consideration. Upon completion of the interviews, the technical stakeholder group discussed with staff the pros and cons of each consultant team. The group found that both firms were very qualified to complete the proposed scope of work. Due to the similar qualifications and experience of the two firms, the stakeholder group did not make a recommendation on one proposal to the Town and County. Instead, staff including Chris Neubecker, Paul Anthony and Tyler Sinclair have considered the excellent review comments and discussion of the stakeholder group in making a recommendation to the elected officials.

In addition, staff completed reference checks on both WSW and Clarion as part of their consideration. Based upon review of the original responses, interview questions, stakeholder input, and reference checks, staff are recommending WSW for completion of the Housing Nexus Study and Needs Assessment. Justification behind this recommendation include:

- Extensive prior work experience completing similar studies in similar communities;
- Extensive professional experience across all team members bringing a unique combination of skills and experience allowing for the most diversified, all-inclusive, and creative approach to the scope of work; and
- An opportunity to provide a fresh perspective in reviewing our housing mitigation program and regional needs to determine the best path forward for the community and region.

In making this recommendation staff is also recommending that the following additional work be included into the scope of work outlined in the RFQ based upon discussions during the proposal review period:

- Clarification of the role of OPS Strategies on the team regarding the review of previous mitigation work, identifying best available local data, and assistance in local outreach as needed;
- Inclusion of a specialized Housing Mitigation/Land Use Attorney to assist in the review and development of the Housing Nexus Study. This task, if deemed necessary, may be included as part of the WSW scope of work or by the County/Town contracting separately whichever is determined to be the County/Town's preference.

- Inclusion of a new final phase which will combine recommendations and options from both the Nexus Study and the Regional Needs Assessment into one comprehensive housing strategy. During this step, WSW would facilitate a discussion with electeds about a spectrum of housing requirements and incentives and the pros and cons of each to develop a balanced community housing strategy. This will be an important addition to consider the tradeoffs required in a coordinated and actionable housing strategy that has strong community and political support at both the local and State level.

If the Town/County concur with staff's recommendation, then the above additional tasks would be included in a revised scope of work as part of final contract consideration by Teton County. Staff is recommending the contract be entered into by Teton County and not the Town of Jackson as the Affordable Housing Department is a County Department.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ALIGNMENT

Comprehensive Plan Policy:

- Maintain a diverse population by providing workforce housing. Principle 5.1.
- Reduce the shortage of housing that is affordable to the workforce. Principle 5.3.

Housing Action Plan Strategy:

- Require mitigation of employees generated by growth that cannot afford housing. 5C.

STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

Stakeholders include Town and County taxpayers, local working families, business owners, developers, commuters, and visitors. Input has been solicited from the stakeholder group, Housing Supply Board, Jackson Hole Chamber of Commerce, Jackson Hole Working, Shelter JH, and the Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance.

FISCAL IMPACT

Staff has estimated a total project cost of \$300,000 to complete the Housing Nexus Study and Regional Needs Assessment with \$250,000 split 50/50 between the Town and County being requested in the FY22 budget requests currently before the boards. Additionally, Teton County approved \$50,000 for this work as part of a FY21 budget amendment should the work begin prior to FY22. It is anticipated that the total project cost would be split 50/50 between the Town and County. The final project cost will be developed along with the final scope of work, but staff estimates, based upon budget information provided in the WSW proposal, a total project cost of approximately \$300,000, which may be exceeded with the additional tasks requested by staff above. Staff will work with project partners Teton County, Idaho, Driggs and Victor Idaho, Lincoln County, Wyoming and Alpine Wyoming to determine the level of funding that they may be able to provide for consideration as part of the final contract review.

STAFF IMPACT

This project will require significant staff time from multiple departments across the Town and County. These departments include: Town & County Planning, Town Community Development, and Joint Affordable Housing. Town and County legal teams will also be involved in the nexus study portion of the work.

LEGAL REVIEW

K. Gingery and L. Colasuonno

ATTACHMENTS (links)

- [RFQ: Employee Generation by Land Use Study & Regional Housing Needs Assessment](#)
- Responses to the RFQ: [Clarion Associates](#), [Strategic Economics](#), [WSW Consulting](#)
- Interview Question Responses: [Clarion Associates & WSW Consulting](#)

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends WSW Consulting to complete the requested Housing Nexus Study and Regional Needs Assessment and that they work with staff to develop a final scope of work and Professional Services contract to be reviewed by Teton County at a future meeting. Staff is recommending that the final contract and scope of work only be considered by the County as it would be the entity entering into the Contract. Town staff will be involved in the development of the revised scope of work along with County staff.

SUGGESTED MOTION

I move to direct staff to work with WSW Consulting to develop a final scope of work and Professional Services contract to complete a Housing Nexus Study and Regional Needs Assessment subject to the revisions described in this staff report (as may be amended) and that a final contract for Professional Services and associated Scope of Work be reviewed and approved by the Teton County Commissioners prior to execution.