

Request for Proposals

Rio Blanco County Land Use Resolution Rewrite Project

June 26, 2014

Deadline for Submittals: 5:00 pm, MST, August 1, 2014

Rio Blanco County, Colorado is seeking a consultant to rewrite the Rio Blanco County Land Use Resolution (LUR) and facilitate the public process prior to adoption. It is expected that the process will involve significant interaction with County staff and facilitation of public outreach efforts. After agency and public input has been considered, the Land Use Resolution will be brought to the Rio Blanco County Planning Commission for review and recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners for adoption.

Rio Blanco County, located in northwest Colorado, encompasses 3,200 square miles and has a population of 6,666. There are two towns within the county, Rangely, with a population of 2,096, and Meeker, with a population of 2,475. The remainder of the population, approximately 2,000, lives in the unincorporated county. From Meeker, the nearest interstate highway, I-70, is 40 miles away. As such, Rio Blanco County is known for its small-town, rural character. The main economic drivers are ranching and energy development.

Overview of Land Use Resolution

The Rio Blanco County Land Use Resolution is essentially a zoning code that governs the zoning, subdivision and platting of land, variances and appeals, and enforcement within Rio Blanco County, and is intended to provide guidance for growth and development while protecting public health, safety, and the natural environment.

The current LUR was adopted in 2001. In 2011, work was begun to rewrite it, with the intent of minimizing redundancies, improving clarity, and improving navigability. The Colorado Department of Local Affairs's Model Land Use Code for Counties was used as a guide, and those portions of the LUR that have been completed emulate that document. In 2012, a key staff person left the County, and the project has been on hold.

At the time the revision was initiated, the existing LUR had 10 Articles. The intent of the revision team and Planning Commission was to expand the document to 16 Articles. Part of this expansion would result from the addition of more regulations, but most of it was for breaking out certain portions of the LUR into separate Articles, such as Enforcement. It is the County's intent to reduce the volume of text as much as possible without compromising the integrity of the development process or public health, safety, and the natural environment. The list of Articles that the revision team developed are as follows, with completed Articles noted:

- 1 General Administration - *completed*
- 2 Land Use Change Permit - *completed*
- 3 Zoning
- 4 Application & Review Procedures, Land Use Changes Not Including Division of Land - *completed*
- 5 Division of Land
- 6 Planned Unit Development
- 7 Standards
- 8 Temporary Living Quarters - *completed*
- 9 Oil and Gas Regulations - *completed*

- 12 Enforcement - *completed*
- 14 Areas and Activities of State Interest
- 15 Rubbish, Junk, Weeds and Brush
- 16 Definitions

Articles 1, 2, 4, 8, 9, and 12 have been completed by the revision team and approved by the Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners, but they have not been formally adopted. The consensus was to complete all of the Articles and have the Board of County Commissioners adopt them all at one time. One of the reasons for this was to facilitate cross-referencing between Articles.

Four specific portions of the LUR have been recently revised, approved, and adopted, and therefore will not require any further work, other than to insert them into the completely revised LUR:

- Section 245, Floodplain Regulations
- Section 410, Special Use Building Permit for Wellpads
- Section 411, Special Use Building Permit for Pipelines
- Section 236, Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (aka ISDS)

The overall goal for this project is to rewrite the Land Use Resolution in a manner that makes it clear, understandable, and user-friendly and that incorporates design standards that are appropriate for the County. The regulatory framework should guide opportunities for growth and development, while balancing protection of the attributes that make Rio Blanco County a desirable place to live, work, and recreate, such as clean water and air, natural landscapes, ranch lands, abundant wildlife, pleasant small towns, and rural character.

The Rio Blanco County Land Use Resolution has undergone periodic (but not comprehensive) revisions and updates to comply with state law changes or to address discrete issues without addressing how the entire package reads and works together. The current Land Use Resolution is written to address review of projects proposed throughout the county; however, design standards are not flexible or appropriate for the variety of development contexts, particularly in rural areas. In completing its revision, Rio Blanco County is looking for a document with the following attributes:

- Balanced, in terms of facilitating growth and development, recovery of energy deposits, while protecting landscapes, natural resources such as wildlife, and public health, safety and welfare
- Fair, in that it is clear to landowners, the real estate and development community, development review agencies and staff, and the public what is expected in terms of development, including design, evaluation of impacts, and the review process
- Well written, concise, and comprehensive
- User-friendly for the variety of users including developers, developers' representatives, governing officials, agency personnel, and County residents and landowners
- Streamlined, particularly in terms of procedures, application requirements and paperwork
- Appropriate, particularly in terms of design standards that are tailored for the County's diverse development contexts and needs
- Contains illustrations or diagrams to aid in the comprehension of requirements and standards, particularly those of a spatial nature

At the end of the project, the County expects to be in a position where revisions can be processed internally.

Description of Services Sought

Rio Blanco County is seeking a consultant to rewrite the remaining Articles of the Land Use Resolution. Top priorities for rewrite project components include:

- Rewrite Articles to update language, continue to improve organization, increase clarity and language precision, remove redundancies, address requirements of state and case law, and clarify how discretionary decisions are made.
- Evaluate and update design and development standards. This should consider best practices and the variety of development contexts in Rio Blanco County.

Rio Blanco County's public agencies, development community, and private citizens alike are entitled to and expect a comprehensive, transparent, timely public process for this project. The proposed Land Use Resolution rewrite will require the proponent to facilitate a public involvement process. Some project components will garner more widespread interest than others. Both informal and formal public processes will be necessary.

Scope of Work

As part of the proposal, the proponent is expected to provide a scope of work that includes guidance on how the rewrite project should be organized such as the order and timing of how the County should address various project components. Generally, the County would like to follow the Colorado Department of Local Affairs' Model Land Use Code for Small to Medium Sized Counties (available on the Department of Local Affairs' website), but the County is open to modifications, particularly if they involve simplification and brevity.

Roles and Responsibilities

The proponent is expected to serve as project manager during the process, which is anticipated to involve providing technical expertise and advice, preparing drafts and final documents, providing monthly status reports to the Board of County Commissioners, leading public meetings and workshops, and leading the formal public adoption process.

Rio Blanco County staff expects to oversee the project, provide input and review draft documents, and oversee the formal adoption process.

Time Line

The rewrite effort is expected to commence by Fall 2014. The exact schedule will depend on the scope of work and time line agreed to between the County and the proponent. However, the County would like to see substantial progress on this project in the near future. This could mean completion of an initial project draft by Winter 2014 and completion of the project in 2015.

Qualifications

The individual or firm should have (or develop) the following knowledge, skills, and abilities:

- Knowledge of Colorado's statutes governing County Planning and Building Codes (Colorado Revised Statutes, Title 30, Article 28)
- Familiarity with the Rio Blanco County Land Use Resolution (<http://www.co.rio-blanco.co.us/departments/development.html>), scroll to "Current Rio Blanco County Land Use Resolution)
- Knowledge of Colorado Department of Local Affairs' Model Land Use Code for Small to Medium Sized Counties (<http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/DOLA-Main/CBON/1251594474243>)

- Significant experience drafting land use regulations and associated illustrations
- Familiarity with local agencies, organizations, communities, and interests involved in and/or affected by Land Use Resolutions and review processes.
- Past experience and ability to work with people who have diverse perspectives on land use, development, conservation, and the role of local government in these issues.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills.
- Excellent public meeting skills including meeting management and facilitation
- Proficiency in the use of necessary software, including MS Word and Excel.

Conflict of Interest

Individuals and firms that regularly prepare subdivision applications and represent subdivision developers to the Board of County Commissioners may have a conflict of interest, which will be a factor in the selection process.

Directions for Submission

Proposals must be submitted to:

Mark Sprague
Rio Blanco County Planning Division
200 Main Street
P.O. Box 599
Meeker CO 81641

Proposals must be received no later than **5:00 p.m., MST, on August 1, 2014**. Please provide eight (8) written copies of your proposals.

Questions should be directed to: Mark Sprague at 970-878-9584 or msprague@co.rio-blanco.co.us . Responses to this solicitation are open for public inspection or telephone inquiry.

The following information must be submitted in the proponent's proposal:

1. Form of organization. If not a sole proprietorship, then describe the form of organization, such as, a partnership, corporation, public agency where it is organized, and the names of principals, officers, and directors of the firm.
2. Key personnel. The experience and qualifications of all staff proposed to provide the service.
3. Project proposal. A narrative addressing the scope of work, approach to the project, status reports, deliverables, and time line for the Rio Blanco County Land Use Resolution Rewrite is required. The narrative may address alternative approaches for completing the project. The narrative should demonstrate the following:
 - An understanding of land use issues in rural Colorado counties
 - Experience with public involvement
 - Qualifications to work on the project
4. Availability. A brief statement of the availability of key personnel of the firm to undertake the proposed project.
5. A description of the proponent's knowledge and understanding of Colorado land use laws, and local land use and development issues.
6. Project list. List of similar/relevant projects completed by the proponent.
7. Project budget. The budget should include an overall budget with estimated cost breakdowns for project components or phases.

8. Certificate of Professional Liability Insurance. Please indicate the level of coverage provided.
9. References. Names and telephone numbers of three (3) persons whom the County can call for references regarding the proponent's past performance, preferably on similar projects.

Evaluation Criteria and Selection Process

The final award will be made to the proponent whose qualifications and cost proposal are deemed most advantageous to Rio Blanco County. The following criteria will be used to evaluate the proposals:

1. Ability of the proponent to prepare a complete proposal package that addresses all items in the Request for Proposals
2. Experience of the proponent and project staff on similar projects
3. Proponent's knowledge and understanding of Colorado land use laws, particularly Title 30, Article 28 of Colorado Revised Statutes, and local land use and development issues
4. Proponent's innovative approach to meeting Rio Blanco County's needs in regard to this project
5. Ability of the proponent to meet the County's timeline for the project
6. Cost proposal

The evaluation team may interview finalists in person or over the phone. Rio Blanco County reserves the right to reject any and all proposals.

Rio Blanco County will negotiate a contract, including a detailed scope of work, budget and schedule, with the proponent selected for the project. In the event that a contract cannot be negotiated, Rio Blanco County may negotiate a contract with the proponent whose proposal and cost are determined to be next most qualified based on the selection criteria.