



CITY OF BANNING STAFF REPORT

TO: CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Elizabeth Gibbs, City Manager

PREPARED BY: Matthew Bassi, Interim Community Development Director
Matthew Bassi, Interim Community Development Director

MEETING DATE: August 25, 2026

SUBJECT: Professional Services Agreements for On-Call/As Needed CEQA/NEPA Services

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

The Community Development Department recommends the City Council take the following actions:

1. Authorize the City Manager to execute a Professional Services Agreement between the City of Banning and PlaceWorks, Inc., to provide on-call CEQA/NEPA services;
2. Authorize the City Manager to execute a Professional Services Agreement between the City of Banning and Albert Webb & Associates to provide on-call CEQA/NEPA services;
3. Authorize the City Manager to execute a Professional Services Agreement between the City of Banning and Environmental Planning Development Solutions, Inc., to provide on-call CEQA/NEPA services;
4. Authorize the City Manager to execute a Professional Services Agreement between the City of Banning and Kimley-Horn Inc., to provide on-call CEQA/NEPA services; and
5. Authorize the City Manager to execute a Professional Services Agreement between the City of Banning and Michael Baker International, Inc., to provide on-call CEQA/NEPA services;

BACKGROUND:

The Planning Department has a need to expand our current "5-Firm" CEQA/NEPA short list of qualified environmental consultants to assist the department with the preparation of environmental documents (i.e., MND's & Addendums, EIR's, etc.) as part of the city's on-going development review process. The current short list was approved by City Council on December 9, 2025 via CC Resolution No. 2025-170. Over the past seven (7) months, staff has found that many of the existing CEQA firms are currently working under contract for developer/applicants who have (and have had) active development projects under review by the planning department. This situation creates an inherent conflict of interest and reduces the department's ability to utilize these firms services for "peer reviews," etc.

To remedy this, the Planning Department released an RFP (RFP 26-129) on May 6, 2026 seeking proposals from qualified environmental firms to be added to the city's "short-list" of CEQA/NEPA consultants. The RFP was posted on the city's website with a closing date to submit proposals by May 27, 2026. The City received 16 proposals from various firms during the RFP period. A copy of the CEQA/NEPA Services RFP 26-129 is included for Council reference in Attachment 2.

After close of the RFP period, staff independently reviewed all proposals and ranked each firm on the criteria outlined in the RFP. Following a careful review of the proposals by our internal selection committee, there was consensus on who were the five (5) highest ranking firms. The top five (5) firms

staff is recommending for contract award to assist the department with the preparation of environmental documents are as follows (in no particular order):

- PlaceWorks, Inc.;
- Albert Webb & Associates;
- Environmental Planning Development (EPD) Solutions, Inc.;
- Kimley-Horn Inc.; and
- Michael Baker International, Inc.

The breadth of experience and capacity of these additional firms will provide the department with the best flexibility it needs to assign projects appropriately and quickly to ensure the timely processing of development projects requiring some level of CEQA review. Attached to the Council Resolution is the city's current professional services agreement template (Attachment 2) that will be used to enter into a contract with each firm as approved by City Council. A copy of the draft professional services agreement for each firm (including their proposal) is provided for Council consideration in Attachment 4-8.

JUSTIFICATION:

This process of using qualified independent environmental review firms assists the department in furthering the following goals:

- Provide expert, unbiased environmental analysis of development projects to decision makers. The private consulting firms are available to support and defend their work if challenged;
- Augment staff time so that staff members can work on staff reports, assist customers, and work on council-directed projects;
- Provide environmental review at no cost to the City for private development projects; and
- While the consultants are retained by and report to the City, the cost for the CEQA preparation work is fully paid by the applicant.

At this point in time and anticipating development activity coming forward over the next year +, and in order to save time and expense for the city and our applicant's, having five (5) additional firms ready to go at a moment's notice will benefit the planning department in meeting our CEQA needs. These additional firms will also be in a position to assist the City with city initiated CEQA related services (as needed), including capital improvement and road projects for the Public Works Department. Staff believes having the additional firms "on-call" will also better meet the needs of our development community by providing extra choices that will result in a more expedited process.

It is important to note that the CEQA work provided by all our on-call consulting firms will be fully paid by each developer/applicant through a developer deposit account related to a specific project. The initial term of the Agreement shall last three (3) years from the date of execution with the option to extend for two (2) additional one-year terms not to exceed five (5) years based upon acceptable performance by the Company, acceptable fees and subject to the same terms and conditions of the Agreement. The agreement for each firm (including the firms proposals) are provided for Council consideration in Attachments 3 - 7.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact to the General Fund in approving the agreements as this action only adds qualified firms to the City's established "CEQA On-Call Short List." All future CEQA work assigned to any of the 10 firms will require Council approval of a separate 3-party agreement (scope and budget) when a new development project is submitted for development review. The cost to prepare the CEQA document will be fully paid by the Applicant/Developer funded through a developer deposit account that includes the firm's charges, city's standard 15% overhead charge and any related city attorney charges to review and process the environmental document.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. [Attach 1 - CC Resolution 2026-106 \[8-25-26\].docx](#)
2. [Attach 2 - RFP-26-129 \[CEQA-NEPA Services\].pdf](#)
3. [Attach 3 - Contract No C01279 Albert Webb Associates.pdf](#)
4. [Attach 4 - Contract No C01280 Environment Planning Development.pdf](#)
5. [Attach 5 - Contract No C01281 Kimley Horn and Associates Inc.pdf](#)
6. [Attach 6 - Contract No C01282 Michael Baker International Inc.pdf](#)
7. [Attach 7 - Contract No C01283 PlaceWorks Inc.pdf](#)