

MEMORANDUM

DECEMBER 19, 2013

TO: BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY AND
PETER MEADE, DIRECTOR

FROM: KAIROS SHEN, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING
RICHARD MCGUINNESS, DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR WATERFRONT
PLANNING
CHRIS BUSCH, SENIOR WATERFRONT PLANNER

SUBJECT: AWARD OF CONTRACT TO WOODS HOLE GROUP, INC. FOR FEMA
RISKMAP PROGRAM FLOOD INSURANCE STUDY AND
PRELIMINARY FLOOD INSURANCE RATE MAP TECHNICAL
EVALUATION AND FLOOD ZONE MODELING FOR THE CITY OF
BOSTON

SUMMARY: This Memorandum requests authorization for the Director to enter into a contract for consultant coastal engineering services with Woods Hole Group, Inc. to: (1) evaluate the Federal Emergency Management Agency's RiskMAP Program, Flood Insurance Study and Draft Flood Insurance Rate Maps for the City of Boston; and (2) develop dynamic flood modeling for the City's coastal areas based upon need and availability of funding. The contract shall be for an amount not-to-exceed Ninety Thousand and One Hundred Seventy Four Dollars (\$90,174).

BACKGROUND

Following on a 2009 Congressional directive the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency ("FEMA") initiated its Risk Mapping, Assessment, and Planning (RiskMAP) Program to provide an updated coastal flood hazard analysis, and develop new Flood Insurance Rate Mapping ("FIRM") specific to the City of Boston. This past August FEMA's mapping contractor, STARR, provided the City of Boston with coastal flood hazard workmaps for review. The work maps represent an increase in the Base Flood Elevations and proposed delineations of flood hazard areas (the 1% Annual Chance Floodplain Boundary and 0.2% Annual Chance Floodplain Boundary) that are far more extensive than the Special Flood Hazard Areas represented on the current FIRM's. The proposed, expanded flood hazard areas have significant implications for both public and private property owners within the City of Boston as they represent those properties that must carry flood insurance. The new flood zone elevations and delineations are based upon a new engineering analysis, field

survey analysis, tide gauge and buoy data specific to Boston Harbor, and recent LiDAR data. FEMA issued Preliminary FIRM's on November 15, 2013, with a 90-day appeal period commencing in early 2014. A FIRM Letter of Final Determination is anticipated by June 2014, which will make the maps effective by December 2014.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

On November 14, 2013, the BRA Board authorized the Secretary to advertise a Request for Proposals ("RFP") to engage a consultant team to analyze FEMA's methodology for the RiskMAP Program and resulting Flood Insurance Study and flood hazard area delineations as represented on the Preliminary FIRM's, to assess the validity of FEMA's results and identify any errors, and based upon need and availability of funding, assist the City of Boston in filing an appeal with FEMA and conduct further dynamic flood modeling of the City of Boston's coastal areas.

On November 25, 2013, the BRA issued an RFP for consultant services for the above referenced tasks. The following consulting firms submitted proposals in response to the RFP: Woods Hole Group, Inc., Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc., GZA GeoEnvironmental, Inc. On December 12th and 16th, 2013, an RFP selection committee comprised of staff from the BRA and the Mayor's Office of Environmental and Energy Services reviewed the RFP responses.

CONSULTANT SELECTION

The RFP selection committee evaluated the proposals based on the following criteria: qualifications and experience, experience with coastal systems modeling and dynamic coastal flood modeling; experience with FEMA FIRM appeals, technical qualifications, responsiveness to the scope of services, and allocation of resources and schedule. As a result of this evaluation, Woods Hole Group, Inc., was selected.

FUNDING

Project funding will be provided by the Boston Redevelopment Authority ("BRA").

RECOMMENDATION

The BRA staff recommends that the Director be authorized to enter into a contract with Woods Hole Group, Inc., for coastal engineering services to: (1) evaluate the Federal Emergency Management Agency's RiskMAP Program, Flood Insurance Study and Preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Maps for the City of Boston; and (2) develop dynamic flood modeling for the City of Boston's coastal areas based upon need and availability of funding in an amount not-to-exceed \$90,174.

An appropriate vote follows:

VOTED: That the Director be, and hereby is, authorized to enter into a contract with (Consultant to be Named) for consultant coastal engineering services to: (1) evaluate the Federal Emergency Management Agency's RiskMAP Program, Flood Insurance Study and Preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Maps for the City of Boston; and (2) develop dynamic flood modeling for the City of Boston's coastal areas based upon need and availability of funding in an amount not-to-exceed \$90,174.