

CITY OF PALMER ACTION MEMORANDUM No. 10-048

SUBJECT: Authorize the City Manager to Award and Execute a Contract in an Amount Not to Exceed \$79,960 with Corvus Design to Conduct a Charrette on the Future of the Downtown Railway Corridor

AGENDA OF: July 6, 2010

Council action: Postponed to August 10, 2010 FAILED

Approved for presentation by B.B. Allen, City Manager Bob Casey

Route To:	Department/Individual:	Initials:	Remarks:
X	Originator – Director of Community Development	<i>JD</i>	
X	City Clerk	<i>JL</i> 6/28/10	
X	City Attorney	<i>JK</i> 6/28/10	
X	Director of Administration	<i>HW</i>	
	Director of Community Services		
	Director of Public Safety		
	Director of Public Works		

Attachment(s): Scope of Work from Request For Proposals
 Proposal Letter of transmittal from Peter Briggs, president of Corvus Design
 Project Approach from Corvus Design proposal
 Fee Schedule from Corvus Design proposal

Certification of Funds:

	No fiscal impact.	
X	Funds are budgeted from this account number: 08-01-10-7138	\$50,000
X	Funds are not budgeted. Budget modification is required. Affected account number: The General Fund Fund Balance is approximately \$2,806,000 after this appropriation. Funding of this AM 10-048 is subject to approval of Reso 10-043.	\$29,960

Director of Administration Signature: _____ *HW*

Summary statement: Following the March 9, 2010 City Council approval of the scope of services and a \$50,000 budget, the city requested proposals for professional services to conduct a Charrette to engage the community in a discussion of the desired future of the one and one-half mile railway corridor that runs through the center of the Palmer Downtown district from the Alaska State Fairgrounds to Eagle Street.

Following the advertisement of the RFP in the Anchorage Daily News, city staff received requests for RFP packets from four firms with offices in Alaska. Three proposals were received on or before the RFP submittal deadline. The team that developed the scope of work approved by Council in March was reconvened on June 8 to review the three proposals and ranked them as follows:

1. Corvus Design
2. Agnew::Beck
3. HDR

Members of the team were Councilors Kevin Brown and Michael Chmielewski, Bill Allen, Sara Jansen and Sandra Garley. Councilor Vanover, who is also on the review team, was not able to attend the June 8 meeting.

Each of the three proposals met the requirements of the requested professional services. The costs of services in the three proposals ranged from \$59,633 to \$99,666.60. The community outreach and public participation process described in the Corvus Design's proposal was considered to be the best by all members of the team.

Administration recommendation: Approve Action Memorandum No. 10-048.

City of Palmer RFP: Charrette to Determine the Future of the Downtown Railway Corridor

Submission Requirements

At a minimum, proposals should include the following:

1. A description of the consultant's understanding and approach to the project including projected timeline and anticipated project deliverables.
2. A description of the type and level of support the consultant will require/expect from the project sponsor, such as staff support, provision of meeting/studio space, materials, meals, etc. should be incorporated into the first item above.
3. Expertise of the team: roles and experience of key personnel.
4. A total of six examples of comparable projects completed in the past three years with references.
5. Estimated budget detailing the scope of services and the proposed approach detailing the time and budget allotted to each consultant and sub-consultant by task.

Scope of Services

1.0 Research, Education and Charrette Preparation

1.1 Project Assessment and Organization Tasks: To be conducted with the participation and approval of the Project Management Team (PMT).

- A. Project Management Team Meeting:**
 1. Conduct an initial Project Management Team meeting to create a shared understanding of the project purpose, process and schedule.
 2. Conduct with the PMT an Initial Stakeholder Analysis by identifying key stakeholders, their issues, levels of involvement and strategies for outreach.
 3. Create with the PMT a Charrette Products List, consisting of the drawings, studies and documents that you anticipate would be used to develop a feasible plan to be completed by the end of the charrette. This includes but is not limited to preliminary analysis briefing materials, copies of all public presentations, and implementation plans.
- B. Project Process:** Prepare a guiding document for the PMT listing the project phases, events, and products on a timeline and assignment of roles and responsibilities for each task.
- C. Charrette Activities:** Prepare a schedule of activities describing the type and number of meetings, base data research, and stakeholder engagement tasks to be completed prior to the charrette.

- D. **Charrette Schedule:** Prepare a schedule in table format indicating the events, such as open house hours, meetings, meals and production targets. List the consultant's charrette team members who will be present at these events.

1.2 Stakeholder Research, Education and Involvement Tasks

- A. **Stakeholder Identification and Analysis:** Prepare a document that; indicates the stakeholders e.g. local officials and landowners, community groups, businesses, schools, churches, and community members at-large; their issues and positions; and a recommended outreach and engagement strategy designed to solicit their continued input and participation in the Palmer Charrette process.
- B. **Stakeholder Outreach and Engagement:** Describe the plan for facilitating community engagement according to the Stakeholder Identification and Analysis at three levels:
 - 1) A large public gathering, such as a workshop
 - 2) A group meeting, such as a Chamber of Commerce meeting
 - 3) Individual or small group meeting, which would consist of one to five people, such as elected officials, business and property owners or other stakeholders. The plan should describe the methodology the consultant will use for generating proportional demographic community representation.
- C. **Public Outreach and Engagement:** Conduct a public kick-off meeting early in the project process. The purpose of the meeting is to inform the community, beyond local officials and the press, about the project, the process, and their options for involvement as well as to elicit information and vision elements from the community. Assist with media communications and publicity. Establish and maintain informational website with web based feedback prior to and throughout the charrette process.
- D. **Vision Development:** Conduct educational workshop(s), meetings, and/or walks as described in the Charrette Activities Schedule (Task 1.1C).
- E. **Project Objective and Measures:** Create a set of quantifiable objectives and measures based on stakeholder interviews, governing policies and standards, project goals and economic, engineering, and environmental constraints. These measures may need to be revised as new information arises and will be used to guide the design decision-making process.

1.3 Pre-charrette Base Data Research and Analysis

- A. Base Data Research and Gathering:** The project sponsor will provide copies of all relevant existing related community-planning reports, plans, and studies for the consultant's review. The consultant will conduct necessary base data research on the existing state of the community to close gaps in data needed to prepare the public and local officials for the charrette.
- B. Pre-charrette Project Brief:** Prepare a written report or PowerPoint presentation that summarizes the information from base data research, analysis, and feasibility studies.

1.4 Charrette Logistics

- A. Charrette Studio Logistics:** Advise and assist the Project Management Team in the selection of a studio venue that will function as a place for the charrette, and accommodating drop-in visits by the public during the day or evening when the team is present.
- B. Meeting Planning and Management:** Assist City staff in preparing the plans for the basic room arrangement, facilitation process and agendas for all public meetings.

2.0 Charrette Conduct multiple public charrette meetings that include the following events and tasks:

2.1 Organization, Education, Vision

- A. Primary Stakeholder Meetings:** Conduct initial meeting briefings with primary stakeholders on the first day of the charrette. Meet with elected officials, landowners, lead community activists and any other primary stakeholders in accordance with the Stakeholder Identification and Analysis. The purpose of these meetings is to prepare the primary stakeholders for the public meeting and to elicit any important last minute information.
- B. Charrette Public Meeting #1a and #1b:**
 Conduct a week day evening public meeting and a Saturday public meeting in order to:
 - 1) Establish a community understanding of the project purpose, process, roles and opportunities for community involvement; and
 - 2) Elicit public input on such topics as community values, existing physical conditions and future vision. Actual topics to be determined by the consultant and PMT based on earlier analysis.

2.2 Alternative Concepts Development

- A. Alternative Concepts Development:** Create a number of different plan options based on community input from Charrette Public Meeting #1, the Project Objectives and Measures, as well as engineering, environmental, policy and other project requirements. Three-dimensional drawings are to be used in addition to plan drawings and statistical analysis throughout the project.
- B. Initial Stakeholder Reviews:** Review the alternative concepts with regulatory agencies and primary stakeholders such as landowners and local officials.
- C. Public Meeting #2:** Conduct a public meeting to visually present the alternative concepts and to facilitate a dialogue among all of the relevant viewpoints represented. Three-dimensional drawings are to be used in addition to plan drawings and statistical documents in all meetings. Gather the information necessary to narrow the alternative concepts into a preferred plan.

2.3 Plan Development

- A. Plan Development and Refinement:** Conduct detailed design studies and tests of the preferred plan per the Charrette Products List created in Task 1.1A(3). The purpose of these studies is two-fold, first to assure that the plan is feasible and second, to create the documentation necessary to fully describe the plan to the stakeholders. Example studies include environmental impacts and economic feasibility of the plan. Develop preliminary project implementation documents if needed such as plan standards and codes amendments, as identified.

Presentation

- A. Final Charrette Public Meeting #3:** Conduct a final charrette public meeting. Use PowerPoint or equivalent to present a concise and comprehensive summary of project goals, the charrette process, and the preferred plan. The presentation should cover all elements of the plan, (e.g. planning, transportation, economic, environmental, social, and other development standards). Three-dimensional drawings are to be used in addition to plans, drawings, and statistical documents. Gather community input through an open discussion or open house format. Document community input with meeting notes. Provide the sponsor with PDF files of the final products upon the conclusion of the charrette.

3.0 Completion of Work Following the completion of the Charrette:

- A. Document Review and Revisions:** Finalize revisions to the charrette documents in accordance with the final feasibility studies and the input from the final public meeting.
- B. Public Communications:** Using the press and other media communications, disseminate the proceedings and final products of the charrette. For example, update the project website or post selected charrette products on the sponsor's website.
- C. Final Report:** Produce a report that concisely describes the project, the process, and the plan. The report should cover the entire project process, highlighting stakeholder involvement and decision-making processes. The documents should be capable of educating those who did not participate in the process previously.

B. Letter of Transmittal

City of Palmer - Attn: Sandra Garley
231 W. Evergreen Avenue
Palmer, AK 99645



Proposal for:

City of Palmer RFP: Charrette to Determine the Future of the Downtown Railway Corridor

For Us, It's About Listening.

The project team of *Corvus Design, Patrick Coleman, AICP* and *Brooks and Associates*, is very pleased to provide this proposal for the Railway Corridor Charrette. This team was assembled to provide the City of Palmer with a talented, experienced and completely unbiased approach to finding creative sustainable uses for the railway corridor through downtown Palmer.

Our team brings considerable knowledge and experience attracting, engaging and listening to stakeholders in the community planning process in the Mat-Su Valley. The team has worked extensively with downtown development, revitalization and enhancements. Finally, we possess considerable creativity, urban planning/urban design skills, and graphic capability to translate the community's vision into concept drawings and products that will establish community support for a course of action.

We recognize the desire of the City of Palmer to conduct a planning and design process that involves a broad spectrum and representative group of Palmer stakeholders throughout the project. Our proposal places great emphasis, time, and effort in preparation for the charrette events. Anne Brooks' experience and public involvement work in the Valley will ensure that as many people, interests and groups are involved prior to and during the charrette events themselves. The process will be a success if we build community members who will champion the outcome.

In addition, we will use technology at the charrette to enable people to demonstrate their preferences for vision statements, goals and project concepts through the use of an Audience Response System. This electronic system will provide instant, anonymous and accurate feedback, improve the public participation experience, and add to the credibility of the results of the charrette.

The team includes an urban planner, Patrick Coleman, AICP, landscape architects Peter Briggs, ASLA, and Chris Mertl, ASLA, all with considerable public involvement facilitation, downtown planning and urban design skills. Our skills are even further complemented by the inclusion of Anne Brooks, PE for targeted and effective public outreach and community consultation expertise.

Statement of Firm's Understanding, Willingness, Resources and Availability

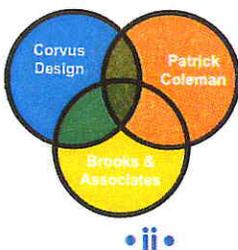
Corvus Design is pleased to be able to submit this response to your RFP, and we are also pleased to be able to offer our commitment to the scope and services outlined within the RFP if our team is selected. Corvus Design has the required staffing and resource availability to meet the scope and services outlined within the RFP if our team is selected.

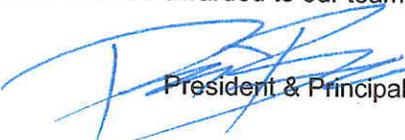
Alaskan Licensure

Corvus Design Inc. has three licensed landscape architects and Brooks & Associates has one licensed engineer.

Authorization for Binding our Firm

Peter Briggs is the president of Corvus Design, Inc. As the prime consultant on this team, Peter has the authority to bind Corvus Design within this contract should it be awarded to our team.




Peter Briggs, ASLA
President & Principal Landscape Architect
Corvus Design, Inc.

2506-B Fairbanks Street • Anchorage, AK • 99503 • 907.222.2859
pbriggs@corvus-design.com • www.corvus-design.com

C.5 Ownership

Corvus Design, Inc., as the contracting body, is an Alaskan professional corporation with current licensing, including a City of Palmer business license. We were incorporated July 1st, 2008 (having previously been a sole-proprietorship).

C.6 Contract Failures

Regarding the desired disclosure of any "alleged significant prior or ongoing contract failures, contract breaches, any civil or criminal litigation or investigation pending which involves the firm or in which the firm has been judged guilty or liable", we have none.

C.7 Location(s)

Our office locations are listed in section C.1

D. Project Planning

Introduction

It is clear the City of Palmer's goal for this process is to engage a large segment of the community in the charrette, listen to their ideas, and develop a feasible community supported plan. We have the experience to deliver this process. We will reach out to a broad cross-section of people in the community, gain trust and listen, and use our planning and design skills at translating community vision into realistic and achievable graphic-oriented concept plans and products that the City may implement with confidence.

Our team has allocated a lot of time to the front end to identify key and diverse stakeholders and get their commitment to engage in this process, especially the charrettes. The team will spend a considerable amount of time in Palmer at charrette events, in an open design studio, and promoting the charrette at community events. We have provided a detailed plan for community involvement that will be fine tuned with the Project Management Team.

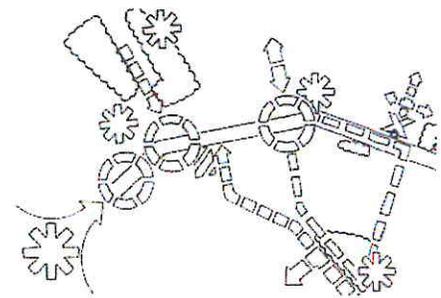
For the large public charrette meetings, we will use a relatively new technology known as an Audience Response System (ARS) to allow participants to vote on aspects of the vision and concepts. Using handheld digital devices, we will get instant and accurate feedback and can generate ARS-generated data reports. Other benefits of this system include:

- Strengthens plan support and implementation.
- Improves the public participation experience.
- Provides visuals for lay audiences.
- Allows for anonymous answers.
- Increases inclusiveness.
- Adds to transparency/ credibility.
- Lightens up mood of meeting.

The team planner and landscape architects are also design focused and will produce the visual concepts and renderings needed to communicate the community vision.



Group discussion and interaction

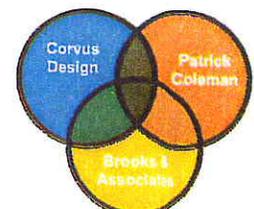


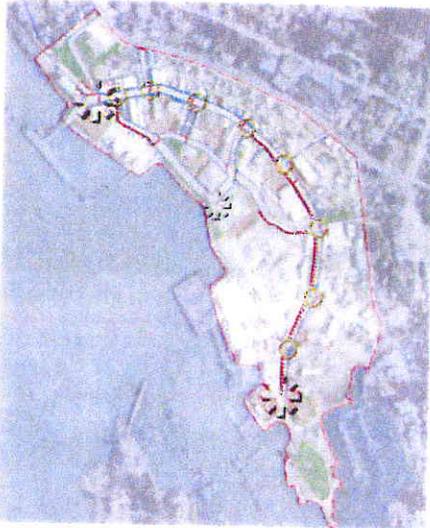
Rough spatial relationship diagram

Deliverables

Listed below are the anticipated project deliverables, subject to discussion and modification with the PMT:

- PMT kick-off meeting summary
- Stakeholder and Outreach Activities Table
- Final Charrette Activities Schedule
- Project Objectives and Measures
 - Pre-charrette Project Brief
- Handouts/Project Information Briefs
 - Walking Tour Guides and Maps
 - Charrette public comments, Audience Response System graphs, tables and chart products
- Charrette sketches, graphics and alternative concepts
- Draft final drawings and documents
 - Final Report





Overlaying information on existing aerial



Engaging people and helping them to provide information



SketchUp as a relatively fast visualization tool (shown as used for Wasilla)

Communication

Effective communication will be critical for the project, and we offer communication expertise whether written, verbal or graphic. As this process will be centered around community charrettes, graphic communication will be important to help capture/envision people's ideas, and to be able to bring those ideas back to subsequent meetings.

Prior to meetings we will be developing appropriate materials to act as base information and to act as things for people to write and notate on. These will include base mapping, aerials, and for later meetings, illustrations.

During the meetings themselves, we will have designers present who can essentially sketch as people talk. If appropriate, this is an effective graphic method of note-taking. During breakout sessions, we will also be able to work directly with people to help them be heard through helping them visualize their thoughts. In addition to fast and responsive sketching, as needed we can also provide digital ways to begin to show ideas in a three-dimensional way. Through software such as SketchUp, in fairly short time we can develop models that allow people to envision even better what others are saying, or to see their own ideas.

After the meetings we will work to ensure that we have captured what has been brought forward, and to develop it as needed for subsequent meetings.

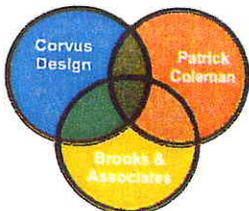
Another method of recording and summarizing information that we would like to discuss bringing forward is the idea of digitally recording aspects of the meetings. This could take the simple form of setting up a video camera in a corner and asking people to speak about their memories and thoughts about the corridor, forming an oral history. This could also be worked further into the project to help document preferred alternatives. This requires more editing, but can be an effective addition to the other communication strategies we bring forward. This is especially powerful when combined with online recording methods such as blogs (for an example of how we recorded public involvement for a less intensive process, see example project blog in appendix).

Support Requested From Client

We expect good communication from the City. We will keep you fully informed of our activities and recognize City staff is busy and will limit our requests for assistance. We do expect the following:

- Providing good base mapping in ARC, AUTOCAD or PDF files, aerial photos.
- Provide all background materials, previous studies, reports.
- Input on stakeholder and citizen identification and outreach.
- Assistance with securing space for the charrette activities and events, including a "studio space" in the community.
- Provide staff for meetings to answer questions.

This section of the proposal outlines and describes the proposed scope of services. The City of Palmer thoroughly identified the type of charrette planning process desired. Our proposal responds directly to the scope of services in the RFP.



1.0 Research, Education and Charrette Preparation

1.1 Project Assessment and Organizational Tasks

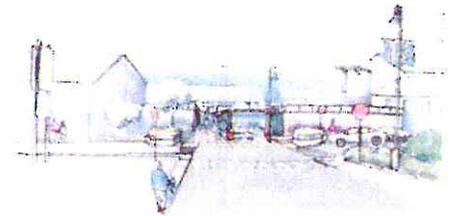
Our team will work closely with the Project Management Team to organize and plan the Charrette activities, schedule, and public involvement.

A. Project Management Team Meeting

We will meet with the Project Management Team (PMT) to kick off the project and gain more understanding of the project goals and stakeholders. At this meeting, we will work with the PMT to identify stakeholders, issues and level of involvement, communication with the public via web and web blog. We will also work with the PMT to identify the actual products to be produced throughout the charrette process and the final document. We will want to review and discuss base mapping, previous studies and reports, the Comprehensive Plan, the joint use permit from the Alaska Railroad that has been executed for the rail corridor, and other information available. A critical element of this early meeting is to fully understand and be able to illustrate for the public any challenges, constraints and guidelines imposed by the permit agreement with the Alaska Railroad.



Sketching spaces



Adding quick color to sketches to make them easier to understand

B. Project Process

A document will be prepared that summarizes and expands upon the results of the PMT kick-off meeting. This product will serve to define the process, schedule, public involvement, expectations and charrette products.

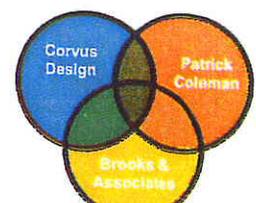
C. Charrette Activities

The project team will develop a table similar to the one below to discuss with the Project Management Team to determine if we have missed any group known to the PMT. The schedule will contain project and community meetings and set the activities the team will complete prior to the charrettes.

Date	Activity	Stakeholder group
May/June 2010	Identify Stakeholders	Land owners, businesses, Palmer residents, elected officials
June 2010	Postcard mailer to all Palmer addresses	Solicit contact information, issues and concerns, and engage broad resident base
June/July 2010	Palmer Chamber of Commerce Luncheon	Attend and present project/solicit input on who and how to involve Palmer businesses in Charrettes
June/July 2010	Friday Fling – set up booth to talk to residents	Palmer residents and visitors
June 11 – 13	Colony Days Celebration	If possible, piggy back on this Chamber of Commerce event to get the word out about our project, determine issues, determine how residents/stakeholders prefer to be involved
July 17, 2010	Palmer Pride Picnic	
September 16, 2010	Mat-Su Transportation Fair	

Note: The above table is for example purposes only, and will be further developed during the process

Patrick Coleman and Anne Brooks will be responsible for working with the community, gathering background materials, attending community events, stakeholder meetings and interviews prior to the actual charrette. Peter Briggs and Chris Mertl will be joining Patrick and Anne for all charrette events.



D. Charrette Schedule

The table below provides in outline form some of our ideas for promoting and executing the charrette and the progression of public planning events.

Meeting/Activity	Date	Outreach methods
Primary Stakeholder Meeting(s)	TBD	Postcard Mailer, Email Notice, Posters
		Frontiersman article to kick off process
		Meeting, 5-9 p.m., post materials to web
Charrette Public Meeting 1a, weekday evening	TBD	Postcard Mailer, Email Notice, Posters
		Frontiersman Ad
		Meeting, 5-9 p.m. post materials to web
Charrette Public Meeting 1b, Saturday	TBD	Postcard Mailer, Email Notice, Posters
		Frontiersman Ad
		Meeting, Noon - 4 p.m., post materials to web
Public Meeting #2, Alternative Concepts Development	TBD	Postcard Mailer, Email Notice, Posters
		Frontiersman Ad
		Meeting, 5-9 p.m., post materials to web
Final Charrette Public Meeting #3	TBD	Postcard Mailer, Email Notice, Posters
		Frontiersman Ad
		Meeting, 5-9 p.m., post materials to web

Note: The above table is for example purposes only, and will be further developed during the process

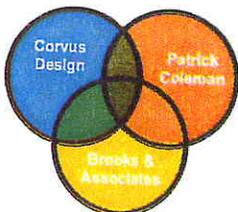
1.2 Stakeholder Research, Education and Involvement Tasks

A. Stakeholder Identification and Analysis

Public acceptance and creation of champions for the plan will be a key success measure for the Palmer project. Immediately following project award the project team will work to identify key stakeholders, determine their issues and concerns and ask them how they prefer to be engaged. Our conversation will open with "We are working with the City of Palmer to facilitate a community discussion to determine the future uses and design of the downtown railroad corridor. Would you like to help?"

To the extent possible, the team will use existing activities to begin the discussion. A booth at the Friday Fling, table at the local coffee shop(s), and a flyer/mailer to all address holders in Palmer are envisioned. We believe at this stage, one on one conversation, referrals from others and self-identification will work best initially. The early list will be analyzed to determine whether a representative cross section of voices in Palmer is included. If not, we will seek out and engage additional folks. We see this as the most important part of the project.

At this stage, we would develop and use a project fact sheet containing the scope, tentative schedule and study area.



B. Stakeholder Outreach and Engagement

The project team will facilitate the community engagement as described below:

For large public gatherings, such as a workshop – we envision beginning the meeting with a presentation of background to describe the scope of the project, how folks can be involved and format for the meeting. We want to create an environment where the local residents talk, discuss, suggest and evaluate ideas themselves. We are only the facilitators—the outcome is the community's. We will train staff and others to assist. Topics will be introduced, discussed and summarized. We will integrate audience response polling to narrow the ideas and document attendee acceptance.

For a group meeting, such as the Chamber of Commerce – we would make a presentation, answer questions and then ask the group for feedback using a variety of methods – detailed comment sheets, annotated maps, a summary of public meeting feedback with a request for input. For example: to what extent do you agree with....? This will allow the team to seamlessly integrate group input. These meetings will extend the public meetings and charrettes. Always—these group members will be encouraged to participate in the charrettes.

For individual and small group meetings—the team will piggyback on existing meetings. We will attend City Council, Chamber and other local meetings to the extent possible. Experience has shown that it is difficult to get folks to another meeting so we will go where they are. We will work with the group to develop feedback methods that will provide public input to our work products.

In all cases, the meeting approach will be tested with the Project Management Team.

C. Public Outreach and Engagement

We will kick off the project by informing all Palmer residents of the opportunity to be involved in the development of a plan for Palmer's railroad corridor. The web site and email tools will be set up and available prior to this meeting. Team and key stakeholder "facilitators" will be prepared.

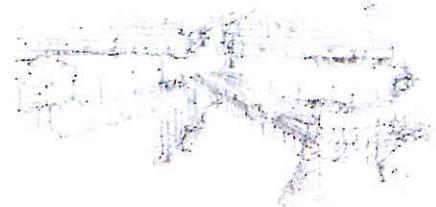
We propose to use a "world café" type event for this initial conversation. World Cafes are described by the International Association for Public Participation as "a meeting process featuring a series of simultaneous four-way conversations in response to predetermined questions. Participants change tables during the process and focus on identifying common ground in response to each question." When the public enters the meeting they will see numerous tables. A question will be prominent at each table and will be the "focus" of that table's conversation for a prescribed time – usually about 15-20 minutes. The event is designed so that all participants circle the room and address each question. At the end of the meeting, we will ask the tables to report what they hear.

For this project, the key questions will include:

- What children's activities do you envision happening in the rail corridor?
- What adult activities do you envision happening in the rail corridor?
- What activities could occur in the rail corridor to stimulate business activity and spending in Palmer?
- What are important current uses of the corridor?



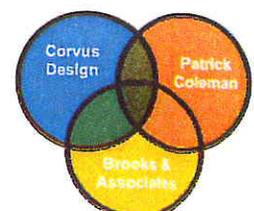
Gaining information through mapping

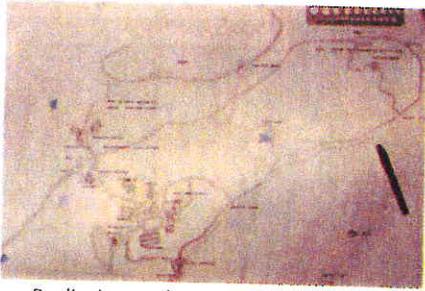


Base for perspective to help people envision what a place might look like



Public review session with staff and exhibits





Preliminary sketch for Palmer Hayflats



Refined illustration for Palmer Hayflats

D. Vision Development

Our proposed approach to the community vision development is presented in this proposal in the subsequent section titled 2.0 Charrette.

E. Project Objectives and Measures

We will develop quantifiable objectives and performance measures or Guiding Principles for the project that will be based upon community and stakeholder input and revised as necessary throughout the charrette process as necessary.

1.3 Pre-charrette Base Data Research and Analysis

A. Base Data Research and Gathering

We will gather as much information as is available to gain a thorough and complete understanding of the project site and community. We see the conditions of the Alaska Railroad permit as an important aspect of the research. Digital base mapping, previous studies and reports, including the Palmer Urban Revitalization Project report, the Comprehensive Plan, the joint use permit from the Alaska Railroad that has been executed for the rail corridor, utilities and R.O.W. information, and other available background materials will be gathered, analyzed and relevant information summarized. A lot of this data is readily available and we have reviewed some of these materials already in preparation for this proposal. This information will be analyzed, and any gaps identified and researched.

B. Pre-charrette Project Brief

We will prepare a document that summarizes the base data background information. By using PowerPoint for this brief, it can be used throughout the process to give charrette participants background information for a better understanding of the issues and previous work that has been completed.

1.4 Charrette Logistics

A. Charrette Studio Logistics

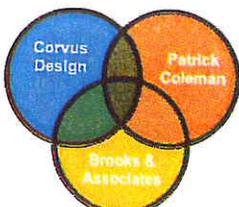
Our team is proposing to work in Palmer during normal business hours during the week of the first two public meetings. The Studio site should be close to the project area. We do not need a large space but have some requirements for tables, chairs, small meeting area, etc. We will coordinate and work with the PMT to identify a suitable location on-site for the studio.

B. Meeting Planning and Management

We will work with City staff to prepare for the actual charrette meeting facility arrangements. We anticipate providing all necessary materials, agendas, handouts for the events but will provide copies in advance for review and comment by the PMT.

C. Food and Refreshments

We will provide all snacks and refreshments for the Charrette activities.



2.0 The Charrette

This section of our proposal provides an overview of the actual charrette process.

2.1 Organization, Education, Vision

A. Primary Stakeholder Meeting(s)

In advance of the charrette public meetings, we will reach out to as many stakeholder groups, key persons, landowners, the Chamber of Commerce, downtown merchants group, civic organizations and others to be identified. Our philosophy is to go to these groups, make ourselves available to them at their convenience, and meet with them on their turf.

B. Charrette Studio

We are excited about the opportunity to interface with interested persons in a studio setting while we are analyzing information, sketching concepts and preparing products for presentations. This personal contact helps people understand the design process better and we have the opportunity to listen and learn more. We will prepare in advance and promote the studio hours and be there during that timeframe.

C. Walking tours

Self-guided walking tours using maps and materials prepared in advance allows participants to view the study area, see it through a new set of eyes, formulate ideas and record their impressions and thoughts. We will promote a walking tour in advance of the charrette and prepare graphics, maps and comment sheets for participants. The Walking Tour may be done in advance by participants on their own and right before the start of the charrette public meetings.

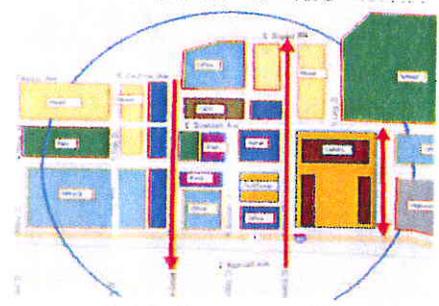
D. Audience Response System

We are proposing to use a relatively new technology known as an Audience Response System (ARS) to allow participants to vote on aspects of the vision and concepts. Using handheld digital devices, the participants will be able to provide direct input from their seats. We will get instant and accurate feedback and can generate ARS-generated data reports. We have approximately 80 handsets available, if more people are present, we can allow for sharing as well as have paper ballots available.

The benefits of ARS are:

- Use of this technology will create more support for the plan and implementation efforts.
- Being able to directly "vote" improves the public participation experience.
- The system allows for anonymous answers and increases inclusiveness.
- When people can see instantly the support and approval of vision and concept ideas, it adds to transparency/ credibility.
- Using this technology creates opportunities for humor and lightens up the mood of meeting.

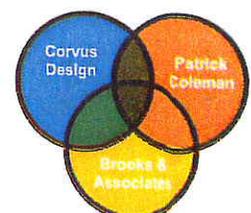
We are excited about the opportunity to bring ARS to the charrette process in Palmer!

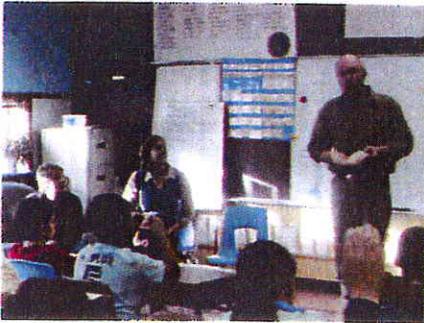


Quick diagrams to aid people in understanding relationships and context



Using field trips and walking tours to gain information and local knowledge





All ages will need to be brought into the process



Applying various facilitation tools to help people be heard ('dot-mocracy' shown above)



Open methods of gaining information, and using the public to filter, organize and present their own findings

E. Charrette Open House Events

The workshops described below will be preceded by open house events where participants can meet the design team and view project materials. By scheduling these in the mid afternoon hours, we may entice more participation from people who have schedule conflicts with the evening events.

F. Charrette Public Meeting 1a, weekday evening

We will schedule and lead the first public charrette workshop. Our goal is to create an informal but orderly environment that people are comfortable participating in.

We envision beginning the meeting with a PowerPoint presentation of background information to describe the scope of the project, how folks can be involved and format for the meeting. We want to create an environment where the local residents talk, discuss, suggest and evaluate ideas themselves. We are only the facilitators—the outcome is the community's. We will train staff and others to assist. Topics will be introduced, discussed and summarized. We will integrate audience response polling to narrow the ideas and document attendee acceptance.

G. Charrette Public Meeting 1b, Saturday

Using the same format as described above, a second public meeting will be conducted on a Saturday afternoon.

2.2 Alternative Concepts Development

Following the two public meetings, we will analyze all community comments and information collected. This will be summarized and a set of Guiding Principles prepared. We envision preparing a number of sketches, 3-D, cross section and plan view colored graphics and drawings to communicate the community's ideas. This work will be done in the Studio so that the public can drop in, watch and participate. At a minimum, no less than three (3) different concepts will be prepared.

A. Initial Stakeholder Reviews

We will meet with City staff and the PMT, primary stakeholders, agencies and others to review the alternative concepts.

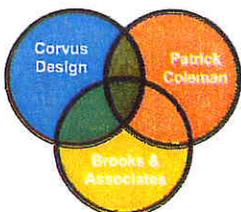
B. Public Meeting #2, Alternative Concepts Development

Within a one to two week period following the first public meetings, we will schedule and lead a public meeting to present alternative concepts. The meeting will begin with a presentation of the charrette process, background information and results of the first two public meetings. Following the presentation, participants will have the opportunity to discuss the alternatives, ask questions and suggest changes and modifications. All these comments will be recorded. Participants will select their preferences using the ARS technology.

2.3 Plan Development

A. Plan Development and Refinement

Based upon the public's preferences, we will revise and prepare final drawings and draft documents, as listed on the Charrette Products document previously agreed upon, in preparation for a final charrette presentation. This will include feasibility testing, including factors such as cost issues, permitting, environmental impacts, and existing code constraints. Additional study and development will be carried out as necessary.



2.4 Presentation

A. Final Charrette Public Meeting #3

We will organize and lead the final public meeting for the charrette. Our presentation will provide a short summary of background information; summarize the charrette process, goals, the community vision and the final preferred concept plan.

The PowerPoint presentation will be comprehensive and cover all aspects of the plan including land use, transportation, economic, environmental and social factors, phasing opportunities and implementation.

3.0 Completion of Work

A. Document Review and Revisions

We will make corrections, revisions and changes to the final documents based upon public comments from the meeting and client review.

B. Public Communications

All participants will be notified via postcard and email as well as through press releases to media that revised documents are loaded on the project and city websites.

C. Final Report

The final report will be prepared for the entire planning process with focus on documenting citizen and stakeholder involvement and the decision-making. The document will be concise, informative and fun to read.

We are happy to discuss with you the final format for the Final Report, and suggest alternatives such as posters, digital copies and other new and exciting formats for a document such as this.

E. Anticipation of Implementation Issues

We believe excellent communication with the City is the key to solving any implementation problems. While we cannot foresee all possible problems, we pledge to work with you to resolve any issues that do arise in the implementation of the charrette.

Conducting the charrette during the summer months will present conflicts with residents and stakeholders recreational and vacation pursuits. Our work during the pre-charrette tasks to seek out and meet individually with people, as well as the numerous public events we propose to attend, and the multiple charrette events themselves will provide numerous opportunities for stakeholders and citizens to provide input around their personal schedules

Our investigations and research will identify potential issues with implementation of the actual project conceptualized in the charrette. A critical element of the kick-off meeting with the PMT is to fully understand and be able to illustrate for the public any challenges, constraints and guidelines imposed by the permit agreement with the Alaska Railroad.

There may be other challenges, but communicating these effectively to the City, PMT, and the public will result in a plan that is realistic and can be implemented.

