



Dear Residents:

The City has received copies of an email from "San Marin Compatible Housing" that is being circulated to the community regarding the contract for the consulting firm DC&E and the work they have been hired to perform on the Novato General Plan update. The email outlines information about DC&E and urges residents to attend the December 14<sup>th</sup> Council meeting to speak out against the contract. A copy of the email is attached below.

While we welcome the public to attend Council meetings, we also want to clarify a few points in the email to ensure full information is available. A reduction of the DC&E contract is on the agenda for the Tuesday, December 14<sup>th</sup> Council meeting. Originally, the firm DC&E was hired by the City to assist with the General Plan update with a contract amount of approximately \$811,000. That contract is paid for with money from funds collected with development applications. None of the funds for the DC&E contract come from resident taxes or the General Fund.

The contract with DC&E is in effect now and unless changed by the City Council, will continue in effect until completion of the General Plan. City staff has proposed that the City Council modify the original contract by significantly reducing the original contract and DC&E's work scope; this is not a renewal, it is not rehiring DC&E and no add-ons are being proposed. In fact, the proposed action will reduce the original contract by over \$160,000. DC&E's role in the continuing preparation of the General Plan update will be significantly reduced if the proposed changes are implemented and City staff will be performing much more of the work that is yet to be done.

General Plans are very technical documents. City staff does not have all of the technical expertise to complete preparation of the final General Plan update and especially the environmental review that will be required. If a new consultant were to be brought in to assist the city, the costs would be higher, as that new consultant would have to be educated regarding the community perspectives and environmental issues prior to commencing work.

Under the proposed contract reduction, DC&E's role will be limited to performing primarily the more technical tasks and preparing the EIR. DC&E's work will be directed by City staff, who will insure that Novato's community values are imbued in future work. In regard to housing policies, City staff is working with the City Manager's Ad Hoc Working Group to develop a list of housing sites, density provisions and housing policies that are responsive to the wishes of the community. Any and all work done by the consultant regarding housing and all other General Plan issues will be reviewed by the community, the General Plan Steering Committee, the Planning Commission and the City Council, and will reflect the goals and aspirations of Novato residents.

Based on the original email below, we hope this information provides additional clarity. Please contact [City@cityofnovato.org](mailto:City@cityofnovato.org) if there are additional questions or concerns. We hope this information is helpful. Thank you for caring about your community.

Sincerely,

Dave Wallace  
Community Development Director

**From:** San Marin [<mailto:sanmarincompatiblehousing@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Sunday, December 12, 2010 8:50 AM

**Subject:** Balanced Housing - URGENT - City Council Meeting Tuesday - December 14th

**Novato City Council dumps 30 year tradition  
but won't dump (DCE) a  
million dollar consultant firm  
while raising your taxes!  
Protest DCE Contract  
at the City Council Meeting  
Tuesday, December 14, 2010  
Comments heard @ 6:30 P. M.  
City Council Chambers @ the Old City Hall  
Novato's City Council is about to renew a  
contract with the very same consultants  
(Design Community & Environment)  
that created the original  
high density proposed housing site list.  
Tell your City Council "No More"!**

Last week Jeanne MacLeamy, Madeline Kellner, and Denise Athas overturned 30 years of tradition by passing over mayor pro tem Carole Dillon-Knutsen for mayor and electing Madeline instead, despite Carol's long years of service to the community. This week the Council is poised to renew the contract of the outside consultant who gave us the last affordable housing site inventory. The original contract was for over a million dollars. Half has been paid. This renewal with increases or add-ons is for around \$650,000. The item says "REDUCED BUDGET". These huge sums are being expended for the general plan update.

The consultant is Design, Community, and Environment. This firm is perhaps the leading firm in California for promoting Smart Growth including all of the ideas of transit oriented development. They have prominently consulted FOR ABAG and SMART. Although our Council has not yet signed onto MTC/TAM's incentive grants for developing the areas around Novato's two SMART stations (as far as we know at the moment), the money remains dangling as an enticement to be picked up just for the asking. When this enticement succeeds, Novato is put on the hook for developing about 1700 housing units at the Atherton Station (San Marin & Redwood) and around 1200 units at Hamilton since 500 and 1000 already exist within the 1/2 mile radius of each station. DC&E has already cited their work with Novato in the developing of the station areas in their proposal for services of March 25, 2010 for the City of Petaluma on p. 14 and 15 of SMART Stations TOD Master Plan at <http://www.cityofpetaluma.net/cmgr/pdf/sapg-proposals/dcande.pdf> To quote DC&E's brochure:

"The City has hired DC&E to update its General Plan in an effort to maintain and enhance Novato's unique assets.... Key issues for the General Plan Update include planning for new development around the two SMART stations in Novato, identifying additional sites for housing, accommodating commercial growth, promoting environmental sustainability, exploring

transportation alternatives and enhancing community identity....As part of the General Plan Update, DC&E will update Novato's Housing Element, as well as prepare a detailed community-based vision for redevelopment in the North Redwood Boulevard area of the city."

**Please come to the Council meeting Tuesday at 6:30, fill out a card to speak against hiring any outside consultants but particularly this consulting firm** which will provide more of the same contrived and managed "public participation" and poorly selected sites. If you don't feel comfortable walking up to the podium and saying "Don't renew DC&E's contract", sit in the audience to raise your hand when another speaker asks "How many people are here to protest rehiring DC&E?". If you have another obligation, send the Council an email at [novatocouncil@ci.novato.ca.us](mailto:novatocouncil@ci.novato.ca.us) or call them at 415-899-8900. Send the email today or call them tomorrow. You can also deliver a letter to 75 Rowland Way, 2nd Floor, to the City Clerk before 4:00.

The agenda item is number 5 under the consent calendar. It is unlikely to be discussed, just voted on very rapidly so get there early!

This is what the item looks like:

**5. AUTHORIZE A REVISED SCOPE OF WORK AND REDUCED BUDGET FOR THE CONSULTANT FOR THE GENERAL PLAN UPDATE PROCESS; AND APPROVE A BUDGET FOR THE FACILITATOR FOR THE CITY MANAGER'S WORKING GROUP**

Consider approving a revised scope of work with a reduced budget for the General Plan consultant for the General Plan update process, and approve a budget for the facilitator for the City Manager's Working Group.

***Recommendation: Approve the revised scope of work and reduced budget for the General Plan consultant for a total of \$649,089 (without the 20% contingency), and approve an amount not to exceed \$50,000 for the facilitator for the City Manager's Working Group.***

**THANK YOU!**