

Aptos cityhood backers await word on EIR costs

The group pushing for incorporation of Aptos will know in 45 days how much it will cost for the environmental impact report required for the cityhood drive to move forward.

Pat McCormick, executive director of the Local Agency Formation Commission, said yesterday he will send a "request for proposal" to nine firms. LAFCO holds the power to set an incorporation election.

The cost of the EIR has been the main sticking point for the incorporation effort. Bids were sent out two years ago, but the incorporation backers said the \$90,000 low bid was more than they could raise at the time.

The Incorporation Group's hope is that the new bids can be lower, because the consultant

chosen will be able to use information from the recently completed EIR for the county General Plan.

Last month, the Incorporation Group asked that the county Planning Department be asked to submit a bid to do the EIR.

The Incorporation Group withdrew that request when planning officials said doing the report would be a conflict of interest and McCormick said a county-prepared EIR wouldn't necessarily be cheaper.

But in a letter last week, the Incorporation Group again requested that the county be asked to submit a bid. McCormick told LAFCO members he wouldn't send such a request to the Planning Department.