



## Response to Inquires CEDS Planning Services

*Any questions or requests for additional information concerning this Request for Proposal and/or the Scope of Services should be directed in writing to Mr. Patrick Carleton, Deputy Director, Connecticut Metropolitan Council of Governments by e-mail at: pcarleton@ctmetro.org. Inquiries must be made by 4:00PM on July 29, 2020. Questions associated with this RFP received via phone call will not be responded to or acknowledged. Responses, if any, shall be in writing. Responses to questions or requests for additional information shall be posted to MetroCOG's website (www.ctmetro.org) and submitted via e-mail by 3:00PM on July 31, 2020 and it is the responsibility of the consultant to check the website for updates or addendums to this RFP. Please note that it is MetroCOG's policy to respond only to technical questions. Under no circumstances will MetroCOG provide interpretive guidance. No oral interpretations shall be made to any respondent as to the meaning of any of the documents. Written approval of MetroCOG is required prior to any public disclosure of the cost proposal submitted in response to this RFP or any other subsequent awards.*

The Connecticut Metropolitan Council of Governments received the following questions regarding the Request for Proposals for Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Planning Services:

**1. Do you anticipate extending the bid due date?**

No. All proposals must be submitted by August 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

**2. What additional details are you willing to provide, if any, beyond what is stated in bid documents concerning how you will identify the winning bid?**

No additional details will be provided regarding the identification of the winning bid.

**3. Was this bid posted to the nationwide free bid notification website at [www.mygovwatch.com/free](http://www.mygovwatch.com/free)?**

No.

**4. Other than your own website, where was this bid posted?**

The bid was posted on the State of Connecticut's Department of Administrative Services Contracting Portal as well as various other professional organizations related to economic development and urban/city/transportation planning.

**5. In reviewing the schedule - what is the expected dates for a notice to proceed with the selected consultant and then how long will it take to execute a contract?**

The schedule is dependent on a variety of factors; however, we anticipate selecting and notifying a consultant in September. We will work with the selected consultant to execute a contract as quickly as possible.

**6. Has the Strategy Committee been established yet? And if it has, what organizations are represented?**

Yes. The Strategy Committee consists of members of the Economic Development Committee of our Regional Chamber of Commerce. Members include private businesses, local municipal economic development officials, non-profits, higher education, and other relevant stakeholder institutions.

**7. If 100% of the stakeholder engagement must be done remotely due to the Covid-19 crisis is this acceptable?**

Yes, that is acceptable. We anticipate that most, if not all, stakeholder engagement will need to be conducted remotely. We welcome innovative, user friendly approaches to virtual/on-line engagement.

**8. Are you expecting to have an analysis that includes estimates of Covid-19 economic impacts? Due to the lag in data from federal sources a standard analytic approach would not show any impacts.**

We hope that the analysis can include impacts associated with COVID-19. While a standard analytic approach is unlikely to show impacts in our analysis timeframe, we welcome innovative analytical approaches to address the impacts of the pandemic.

**9. Is the budget to support the consultant's efforts \$82,000?**

No. The budget to support the consultant's efforts is \$60,000.

**10. Can you please provide the budget for the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy engagement?**

The consultant budget for the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy is \$60,000.

**11. So that we can best tailor our response, can you share the budget range that has been established for this project?**

The consultant budget for this Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy is \$60,000.

**12. Given various stay-at-home directives and the rapid increase of Covid-19 cases in many communities, we do not anticipate conducting on-site activities in the near term. Our team is experienced in soliciting input, conducting client meetings, and facilitating stakeholder outreach using easily accessible and user-friendly tools. Will the City consider proposals that include scopes of work that will be conducted remotely until social distancing policies and public health guidelines make air travel and on-site activities feasible?**

Yes, that is acceptable as we do not anticipate any in-person or on-site activities to be conducted in the near future. We welcome innovative, user friendly approaches to virtual/on-line engagement.

**13. What is the expectation around community engagement and stakeholder convenings (in terms of number, format, etc.)?**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we welcome innovative, user friendly approaches to virtual/on-line engagement.

**14. How active will EDA representatives or officials be in the process?**

EDA will issue final approval of our work products; therefore, regular communication and involvement with our EDA Representatives is required.

**15. Is there a minimum or maximum number of qualifications that firms are expected to submit?**

MetroCOG is looking to hire a consultant that has experience in economic development planning and preparation of a CEDS or similar plans. Please provide your firms qualifications as it pertains to items listed in Section II of the RFP.

**16. Is there a target budget or fee for this assignment?**

\$60,000

**17. Is there a specific time frame for assignment completion that we should be aware of?**

The final version of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy needs be completed by June 1, 2021.

**18. How does COVID impact desired in-person community meeting plan? What contingencies would they allow for?**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we welcome innovative, user friendly approaches to virtual/on-line engagement to replace the desire for in-person community meetings. If at any time during the planning process it is safe to resume in-person community meetings, we will work with the consultant and stakeholders to determine the best approach.

**19. With an award in September and due date of December 15<sup>th</sup>, is that realistic? Meeting minutes indicate the grant was extended until June, 2021. Can the consultant schedule expand into 2021 as well to allow a more realistic timeframe?**

Yes, the consultant schedule may expand into 2021. The final CEDS needs to be completed by June 1, 2021.

**20. The Scope of Work states that MetroCOG anticipates completing Tasks I, II and VI. What progress will MetroCOG have made on these tasks before commencement of the consultant engagement? Specifically:**

**a. Will the grant agreement with EDA be finalized?**

Our grant agreement with EDA is finalized.

**b. Will MOUs or Letters of Intent with member municipalities and other relevant stakeholders be complete?**

All of our member municipalities and relevant stakeholders are aware of the planning process. No MOUs or Letters of Intent are required. If for any reason an MOU or Letter of Intent is needed, MetroCOG will work to complete those documents as soon as possible.

**c. Will existing plans, documents and data sources have been compiled, and will they be provided to the consultant?**

MetroCOG will provide all relevant plans, documents and data sources to the consultant upon request.

**d. Will the Strategy Committee have been formed?**

Yes, the Strategy Committee has been formed. Recommendations from the selected consultant on additional membership will be considered.