



# REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Local Planning & Project Development  
Consulting Assistance for the 10-County  
OMEGA Region

**July 8, 2022**

Ohio Mid-Eastern Governments Association  
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# SECTION 1: Basics of the Request for Proposals

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Ohio Mid-Eastern Governments Association (OMEGA) is requesting proposals for a CONSULTANT to provide planning and project development assistance to local governments and economic development professionals throughout our 10-county region which includes Belmont, Carroll, Columbiana, Coshocton, Guernsey, Harrison, Holmes, Jefferson, Muskingum, and Tuscarawas Counties. OMEGA will consider submissions from firms, persons, or any combination thereof (i.e. groups) to serve as the CONSULTANT. Working alongside OMEGA staff members, the CONSULTANT will play a critical role in assisting local leaders as they advance critical infrastructure, workforce development, site development, healthcare, and related projects that require additional manpower and expertise. This activity is being funded through a grant from the US Economic Development Administration (EDA).

## 1.2 PROCURING AND CONTRACTING AGENCY

This Request for Proposals (RFP) is being issued by OMEGA, which is the sole point of contact during the selection process. The person(s) responsible for managing the procurement process is Evan Scurti, Senior Development Specialist for OMEGA.

## 1.3 SCOPE OF WORK

Proposals will need to include the CONSULTANT's approach and general ability to perform the following core tasks:

- **Technical assistance and grant writing pertaining to county-level efforts to expand and improve broadband** – In 2022, OMEGA completed a Regional Broadband Feasibility Study. The selected CONSULTANT will be expected to develop strategies to pursue funding resources for broadband construction and to work with communities in the region to prepare funding applications for broadband projects, including but not limited to, the ARC POWER program, American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, USDA's Reconnect Program, and other state and federal funding resources.
- **Appalachian Community Grant Program:** The selected CONSULTANT will work with OMEGA's staff and communities throughout the application process for planning and implementation grants from the Appalachian Community Grant Program (Ohio BUILDS) to include preparing applications and providing administrative services as required. This may include in person workshops in each of the ten counties.
- **Workforce Development Planning, including Recovery-to-Work Strategies** – Aligning training initiatives with in-demand jobs throughout the region has become a focus for OMEGA. The selected CONSULTANT will work with OMEGA on planning efforts and grant applications to support workforce development programs.

As part of OMEGA’s Recovery-to Work Strategy, the selected CONSULTANT will also develop a Business Resource Guide which will include but not be limited to the following resources available in each of the counties throughout the ten-county region:

- Recovery Service Providers (residential and non-residential)
- Workforce Development Agencies and Organizations
- Transportation Providers
- Childcare Providers
- Housing Authorities
- **Infrastructure and Site Development Planning** -- The selected CONSULTANT will be expected to accompany OMEGA staff on targeted outreach meetings with each of the 10 county’s economic development leaders as well as elected and other appointed officials involved in infrastructure and site development efforts. Many of our counties require assistance in developing priority economic development concepts and projects for the next 5-10 years, and the selected CONSULTANT should play a critical role in these local planning processes.
- **Infrastructure and Site Development Investment Strategies** –OMEGA expects the selected CONSULTANT to provide specialized knowledge of financing strategies and relevant grant programs to move our region’s already-existing priority infrastructure and development site concepts closer to reality. Assistance with applicable grant applications will be required.
- **Downtown Revitalization Strategies** – as needed by our communities and local economic development leaders, the selected CONSULTANT will also be tasked with providing financing and other expertise (e.g. historic building redevelopment and tenant recruitment) for downtown redevelopment. Assistance with the application and use of historic tax credits and new market tax credits may be needed.
- **Creation of a Regional Capital Improvement and Workforce Development Framework** – It is expected that the selected CONSULTANT’s outreach meetings and overall work process will allow for the creation of a capital improvement (i.e. site, building, and infrastructure strategies) and workforce development and attraction strategies framework for the region. The framework document should be targeted for completion by the end of Year 1 of consulting, and then revised as necessary. These CONSULTANT findings and recommendations will be a very important component within OMEGA’s regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) updates.

## 1.4 QUESTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

Any questions concerning this RFP may be submitted by email on or before **July 25, 2022** as follows:

Evan Scurti  
Sr. Development Specialist  
Ohio Mid-Eastern Governments Association  
[escurti@omegadistrict.org](mailto:escurti@omegadistrict.org)

Entities are expected to raise any questions, exceptions, or additions they have concerning the RFP document or its requirements at this point in the RFP process. If an entity discovers any significant ambiguity, error, conflict, discrepancy, omission or other deficiency in this RFP, the entity should immediately notify OMEGA.

## 1.5 SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Proposals should be limited to no more than 20 pages including references and qualifications and should include the following:

- General Approach to Meeting the Objectives within the Scope of Work
  - Schedule with Milestones
  - Total cost to complete the Scope of Work to include labor, expenses such as travel, supplies, and other miscellaneous costs needed to complete the Scope of Work
  - Point of contact
  - Qualifications
  - Minimum of five references with contact name, phone number, e-mail address and brief description of work performed
- A. Qualifications, Experience, and Capabilities.** Describe the qualifications and capabilities of implementing the scope of services. Include qualifications associated with rural and/or Appalachian economic development planning and successful completion of infrastructure, site development and other core economic development projects. Include knowledge and familiarity with the people and socio-economic conditions of the Appalachian Ohio region. Include project summaries of relevant projects completed.
- B. Key Staff Assigned to Project.** Include resumes of key staff assigned to this project and provide an organizational chart identifying personnel assigned to this proposal, including their roles and anticipated level of involvement. Personnel identified in the proposal must be the principal staff that will work with OMEGA and represent the majority of hours billed.
- C. Company History (if applicable).** Provide overview of company including but not limited to:
- Legal name of business
  - Identification of parent companies, subsidiaries, and affiliates
  - Years in business
  - Names, addresses, position of all persons having a financial interest in the company
  - State of formation
  - Number of employees
  - Licenses and certifications relevant to the described work

All proposals are due by **4:00 PM on August 1, 2022** by **e-mail only** to:

Evan Scurti  
Sr. Development Specialist  
Ohio Mid-Eastern Governments Association  
[escurti@omegadistrict.org](mailto:escurti@omegadistrict.org)

Late proposals will **not** be accepted.

## 1.6 SELECTION SCHEDULE

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>
July 8, 2022	Issuance of the RFP
July 25, 2022	Last day for submitting inquiries
<b>August 1, 2022</b>	<b>Proposals due</b>
August 19, 2022	Notification of Selected Consultant

## SECTION 2: Proposal Procedure & Entity Information

### 2.1 GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS AND INFORMATION

The evaluation and selection of the CONSULTANT will be based on the information submitted in the entity's proposal including relevant experience and creative approach to the scope of work. Failure to respond to each of the requirements in the RFP may be the basis for rejecting a response. Entities should respond clearly and completely in regard to all requirements. Entities must be as concise as possible with respect to presenting a clear and complete proposal.

### 2.2 DEVIATION AND EXCEPTIONS

Deviations and exceptions from terms, conditions, or specifications from this RFP shall be described fully on the entity's letterhead, signed, and attached to the response. In the absence of such statement, the proposal shall be accepted as in strict compliance with all terms, conditions, and specifications and the entity shall be held liable.

### 2.3 AFFECTIVITY OF OTHER MEDIA

This RFP is the official media governing proposal procedures. No other documents, letters, or oral instructions shall have any influence whatsoever, unless incorporated by reference herein, or unless an official AMENDMENT is made to this document by OMEGA.

## SECTION 3: Non-Discrimination

No person in the United States must, on the ground of race, color, national origin, handicap, age, religion, or sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under, any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

To effectuate compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 ( 42 U.S.C. Section 2000d et seq.); as amended, OMEGA is required to include the following in any solicitation or contract and these provisions will be incorporated into the contract between OMEGA and the selected consultant (CONSULTANT). The CONSULTANT will need to abide by these provisions:

1. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. §§ 2000d *et seq.*) and DOC implementing regulations published at 15 C.F.R. Part 8 prohibiting discrimination on the grounds of race, color, or national origin under programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance.
2. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. §§ 1681 *et seq.*) prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex under Federally assisted education programs or activities.
3. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. §§ 12101 *et seq.*) prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability under programs, activities, and services provided or made available by State and local governments or instrumentalities or agencies thereto, as well as public or private entities that provide public transportation.
4. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. § 794), and DOC implementing regulations published at 15 C.F.R. Part 8b prohibiting discrimination on the basis of handicap under any program or activity receiving or benefiting from Federal assistance. For purposes of complying with the accessibility standards set forth in 15 C.F.R. § 8b.18(c), non-federal entities must adhere to the regulations, published by the U.S. Department of Justice, implementing Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (28 C.F.R. part 35; 75 FR 56164, as amended by 76 FR 13285) and Title III of the ADA (28 C.F.R. part 36; 75 FR 56164, as amended by 76 FR 13286). The revised regulations adopted new enforceable accessibility standards called the “2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design” (2010 Standards), which replace and supersede the former Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards for new construction and alteration projects.
5. The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended (42 U.S.C. §§ 6101 *et seq.*), and DOC implementing regulations published at 15 C.F.R. Part 20 prohibiting discrimination on the basis of age in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance.
6. Any other applicable non-discrimination law(s).

## SECTION 4: Proposal Evaluation & Acceptance

### 4.1 EVALUATION AND SELECTION

All qualified proposals submitted in accordance with the terms of the RFP will be evaluated to determine the most responsive entity. A uniform selection process will be used to evaluate all proposals.

OMEGA staff will review and evaluate all proposals received in response to this Request for Proposals. Based upon this evaluation, OMEGA staff will make a recommendation to the OMEGA Executive Board for review and approval.

## 4.2 SELECTION CRITERIA

Proposals will be evaluated and ranked based on the selection criteria outlined below. OMEGA may ask the top ranked firms, groups, or persons to interview as part of the evaluation process. After the conclusion of the evaluation process, the firms, groups, or persons will be ranked in priority order with the highest-ranking firm, group, or person being selected to negotiate a contract and scope of services with OMEGA. If a contract satisfactory to both parties cannot be negotiated, OMEGA will then enter into negotiations with the next highest ranked firm, group, or person and so on until an agreement is reached.

In the event OMEGA elects to negotiate a contract with a selected firm, group, or person, OMEGA reserves the right to negotiate such terms and conditions of the contract, including, but not limited to scope, role, price, and staffing which may be in the best interests of OMEGA. The selected firm, group, or person shall provide written proof of insurance coverage for personal injury and property damage, including comprehensive general and automobile liability and contractual liability.

OMEGA will evaluate proposals based upon the following criteria:

- Experience and ability to successfully complete the scope of work
- Demonstrated experience with local economic development projects, including but not limited to, infrastructure investment, industrial/commercial site development, and broadband
- Familiarity with, and work experience in, Ohio's Appalachian counties
- Experience in obtaining new market tax credits and historic tax credits
- Experience and ability to successfully develop funding applications to various state and federal agencies for community and economic development projects
- Ability to complete the Scope of Work by December 31, 2023 and within the maximum budget of \$188,000.

## 4.3 RIGHTS RESERVED

OMEGA reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to reject all submissions, reissue a subsequent RFP, terminate, restructure, or amend this procurement process at any time. Evaluation criteria contained herein shall be used in evaluating interested firms, groups, or persons for selection. OMEGA may contact any RFP respondent after receiving its submittal to seek clarification on any portion thereof. OMEGA reserves the right to request additional information from any RFP respondent if OMEGA deems such information necessary to complete an evaluation. OMEGA reserves the right to select several consultants to perform tasks under the contract. All RFP

material submitted to OMEGA becomes property of OMEGA and will not be returned to the RFP respondents.