



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Technical Assistance Pertaining to the
Attraction of New Developments in the
South End Downtown District of
Steubenville, OH – Opportunity Zone
#39081000800

July 8, 2022

Ohio Mid-Eastern Governments Association
326 Highland Avenue, Suite B
Cambridge, Ohio 43725
Phone: (740) 439-4471
Email: escurti@omegadistrict.org
Website: www.omegadistrict.org

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 Opportunity Zone project development assistance to local government and economic development professionals representing Steubenville, OH. The CONSULTANT will specifically provide guidance regarding optimal development concepts and processes within the Opportunity Zone in the south end district of historic downtown Steubenville. 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 strive to implement development strategies that will result in new jobs and quality construction within the unique development area.

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:

- **Market Research, Including a Highest and Best Land Use Analysis for the Following Core Development Areas within the Opportunity Zone:**
 - The South End of Downtown Steubenville, with the specific area of analysis bound by: State Route 7 (eastern boundary); South Street (northern boundary); Fourth Street (western boundary); and Slack Street (southern boundary).
 - The South Fourth Street Corridor between Slack Street and South Fifth Street.

The selected CONSULTANT should provide an in-depth analysis of the regional real estate market, including general trends of residential and commercial land development in the Ohio Valley (approximately 10-20 mile surrounding radius). The CONSULTANT'S report should include recommendations pointing to the highest and best use of parcels within the study areas, including redevelopment opportunities for vacant or tax foreclosed parcels. While local officials desire new job creation and capital investment, the CONSULTANT should provide a market driven assessment of development potential and proper land uses. A prospectus-type document should be created to aid local officials in their general marketing of the Opportunity Zone.

Specific attention should be paid to recent traffic trends on State Route 7, as it is contiguous to the primary development area. The CONSULTANT should note in the final report that the prohibition of a left turn onto South Third Street (when traveling northbound on SR 7) may be a factor in facilitating certain land use developments. However, the redesign of this key intersection (i.e. design engineering services) is not requested as part of this technical assistance project.

- **Conceptual Site Plan Development that Illustrates the Use of Opportunity Zone and New Market Tax Credits (and any other suggested public financing tools)** – Based on the market research, the selected CONSULTANT should offer one or more conceptual site plans that include a high-level pro forma development cost analysis. The purpose of this analysis is to educate both local development professionals as well as the local investor/development community on the financing power of Opportunity Zone and New Market Tax Credits, among other tools. The concept will, by necessity, contain several assumptions, including land purchase costs, investors’ income tax liabilities, etc. In addition to general public financing education, the development concept should be a tool for local development professionals, as they strive to attract both local and national investors to this unique downtown district.
- **Qualified Opportunity Fund (QOF) Education and Formation** – Local development professionals have expressed a desire to form a QOF comprised of investors from Steubenville area in order to increase the potential for development capital being deployed into the Steubenville Opportunity Zone . However, the QOF should be formed with a general mission of facilitating transformative capital investment along the Ohio River Corridor and other areas of Appalachia. The selected CONSULTANT should offer specific step-by-step guidance pertaining to the formation and management of a QOF.
- **Stakeholder Meetings** – A minimum of two stakeholder in person meetings shall be conducted. The first meeting shall be to provide an overview of the scope of services and schedule as well as to solicit input from stakeholders on the vision for development of this zone. The second meeting shall be to present the results of this study and to incorporate stakeholder comments into the final work product. Additional meetings (virtual or in-person) may be conducted at the CONSULTANT’s discretion.
- **Monthly Progress Reports and Status Meetings** – CONSULTANT shall e-mail monthly progress reports to OMEGA’s Project Manager and participate in monthly status meetings (virtual or in-person) with OMEGA and the Jefferson County Port Authority Director.

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
Senior Development Specialist
Ohio Mid-Eastern Governments Association
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 project-level planning and consulting. 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
Senior Development Specialist
Ohio Mid-Eastern Governments Association
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
August 1, 2022	Proposals due
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. OMEGA will reserve the right to include local public officials and economic development professionals in the review and interview processes. 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, especially the facilitation of innovative development concepts in distressed Appalachian downtowns
- Familiarity with, and work experience in, Ohio's Appalachian counties
- Ability to complete Scope of Work within a six-month period and within the proposed budget (up to \$75,000).

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.