



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Technical Assistance for Opportunity Zone
Planning and Development Strategies: Belmont,
Carroll, Harrison, Holmes, Jefferson, and
Tuscarawas Counties

October 18, 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 Opportunity Zone planning and development assistance to local government officials and economic development professionals in six counties within the OMEGA district: Belmont, Carroll, Harrison, Holmes, Jefferson, and Tuscarawas Counties. The CONSULTANT will provide guidance regarding marketing, highest and best land use analyses, and economic development strategies to optimize each Opportunity Zone’s development potential. As described below, the Scope of Work will also include detailed analysis and development strategy recommendations for several critical development sites that have been identified within the Opportunity Zones. Working alongside OMEGA staff members, the CONSULTANT will play a critical role assisting local leaders as they strive to implement optimal land use and development strategies within the Opportunity Zones. A 10-month consulting period is expected to complete all phases of this technical assistance.

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 responsible for managing the procurement process is Evan Scurti, Senior Development Specialist for OMEGA.

1.3 SCOPE OF WORK

Proposals must include the CONSULTANT’s approach and general ability to perform the following core tasks:

- **Belmont County** – Zone #'s 39013010802 and 39013011700 reflect the variety of the county’s development opportunities. The villages of Belmont and Bethesda are striving to create unique historic downtowns and consulting services will revolve around efforts to create unique buildings and streetscapes. Bellaire’s Opportunity Zone contains one of Ohio’s busiest river shipping terminals as well as a historic downtown. The selected CONSULTANT shall work closely with OMEGA staff and local officials to offer the following deliverables:
 - *Site Development Strategies and Downtown Streetscape Implementation in Bethesda* – In 2016 Bethesda embarked upon detailed planning to create an inviting downtown via underground utility plans and new landscaping and sidewalks. The selected CONSULTANT shall offer specific guidance on relevant grants and other financing strategies to implement the plan. Grant writing assistance, if feasible during the 10-month term, will be expected. Further, Bethesda’s administration has identified several privately-owned downtown buildings with strong development potential. After consultation with village officials, it is expected that 2-3 downtown buildings will be

- targeted for in-depth analysis, including highest and best use and marketing strategies as well as interior and exterior architectural renderings.
- *Streetscape and General Planning in Belmont* – The village of Belmont presents unique opportunities for cultural tourism in the heart of the county. The selected CONSULTANT shall recommend streetscape design improvements and site redevelopment strategies to local and county leaders.
 - *Industrial Riverfront Development and Downtown Redevelopment in Bellaire* – The Bellaire Opportunity Zone contains a successful private river shipping terminal adjacent to the historic downtown. The selected CONSULTANT should identify opportunities for multi modal industrial expansion and redevelopment of blighted downtown properties within the Opportunity Zone. After consultation with village officials, it is expected that 2-3 downtown buildings will be targeted for in-depth analysis, including highest and best use and marketing strategies. as well as interior and exterior architectural renderings. Streetscape improvement strategies within the zone should also be offered to Village officials.
 - *Marketing Prospectuses* – The selected CONSULTANT shall develop three marketing brochures that capture the attributes of the Opportunity Zones within the three respective villages of Bellaire, Belmont, and Bethesda. Local leaders in each village should be able to utilize the brochures (via digital or print outlets) to market the variety of development opportunities in the zones.
- **Carroll County** – Opportunity Zone # 39019720500 contains two key pending development areas and encompasses the majority of the county seat – Carrollton. The selected CONSULTANT shall work closely with OMEGA staff and local officials to offer the following deliverables:
 - *School Campus Redevelopment* -- Following discussions with leadership from Carrollton and the Carrollton Exempted Village School District, the CONSULTANT shall present a highest and best use analysis for the soon-to-be-demolished school facility parcels, as the District recently opened a new campus. The former school facility area presents an immediate opportunity for economic development and/or the creation of community services (e.g. healthcare or workforce development facilities). The CONSULTANT’s land use recommendations should consider both the community’s need for job creation and necessary community services as defined by local leaders and general research.
 - *40-acre Development Site in Carrollton* -- Following discussions with local leaders and private sector owners of approximately 40 acres along the State Route 43 retail corridor in Carrollton, the selected CONSULTANT shall present:
 - A highest and best land use analysis
 - A conceptual site plan that details new infrastructure, including but not limited to, a water/sewer service plan and construction of an access road
 - A detailed topographical and site grading analysis, including cost estimates to create developable parcels
 - Detailed infrastructure financing strategies to accomplish the conceptual site plan (e.g. TIF, bond financing, and Opportunity Zone financing)
 - *Marketing Prospectus* – the selected CONSULTANT shall develop a marketing brochure that can be used by local leaders (via digital or print outlets) to market the variety of development opportunities in the zone.

- **Harrison County** – Largely comprising the northeast quadrant of the county, Zone #39067975600 is one of Eastern Ohio’s largest. The zone has received some of the largest capital investments in recent Ohio history, as petrochemical complexes like Marathon’s fractionation facility are entirely within the zone. The selected CONSULTANT shall work closely with OMEGA staff and local officials to offer the following deliverables:
 - *Industrial Expansion Strategies that Complement the Major Petrochemical Complexes within the Zone* -- Attention should be paid to gathering input from the County Commissioners, relevant township trustees, and the leadership teams from the incorporated villages of Jewett and Hopedale.
 - *Downtown Redevelopment Concepts – Jewett and Hopedale* – if requested by Village officials, the selected CONSULTANT shall identify historic redevelopment and streetscape improvement opportunities in the respective villages.
 - *Marketing Prospectus* – the selected CONSULTANT shall develop a marketing brochure that can be used by local leaders (via digital or print outlets) to market the variety of development opportunities in the zone.

- **Holmes County** – Holmes County represents one of Ohio’s greatest entrepreneurship success stories, with locally grown manufacturing and tourism companies exhibiting very strong formation and success rates. Zone #39075976600 should be analyzed from the perspective of spreading the county’s general success into redevelopment areas within the zone. The selected CONSULTANT shall work closely with OMEGA staff and local officials to offer the following deliverables:
 - *General Analysis of Commercial and Industrial Development Opportunities* – The large Opportunity Zone, located in the southwest quadrant of the county, contains some of Holmes County’s lowest income, rural areas. Opportunities for unique development strategies should be explored and explained to local officials.
 - *Killbuck Historic Redevelopment* – The zone contains the unique Killbuck historic downtown. There are several pending transformative building proposals and other redevelopment opportunities. After consultation with village officials, it is expected that 2-3 downtown buildings will be targeted for in-depth analysis, including highest and best use and marketing strategies. Streetscape improvement strategies may also be requested after consultation with Village officials as well as interior and exterior architectural renderings of 2 to 3 buildings if requested.
 - *Marketing Prospectus* – the selected CONSULTANT shall develop a marketing brochure that can be used by local leaders (via digital or print outlets) to market the variety of development opportunities in the zone.

- **Jefferson County** – Opportunity Zone #'s 39081011800 and 39081012300 offer some of Eastern Ohio’s most impactful redevelopment opportunities within communities largely defined by Wheeling-Pitt steel mill campuses that employed thousands for decades. The 300-acre mill site in Mingo Junction was recently (2018) purchased by JSW India and employs a steady workforce of 300, while the 80-acre campus in Yorkville/Tiltonsville at the

southern end of the county has been completely demolished by owner CJ Betters Enterprises and is now marketed as the Yorkville Intermodal Terminal.

The selected CONSULTANT shall work closely with OMEGA staff and local officials to offer the following deliverables pertaining to Mingo Junction, Yorkville, and Tiltonsville:

- *Regional Market Research Pertaining to Mingo Junction's Commercial Street Corridor between Logan and Clifton Avenues* --Community leaders should gain a modern perspective of the Commercial Street Corridor. Factors such as the new JSW Steel workforce and traffic trends along State Route 7 should factor into a highest and best land use analysis for the corridor. The potential for development of housing, retail, or office/professional land uses should be detailed in the report.
- *Demolition, Parcel Assembly, and Streetscape Improvement Strategies* -- The report should detail specific tax parcels and buildings that should be targeted for demolition and parcel assembly by Mingo Junction leadership and its economic development partners. Tax-foreclosed parcels and buildings as well as properties that are publicly-owned should be highlighted, but the CONSULTANT will also be permitted to interview building owners to gauge willingness to sell and general development potential. Streetscape improvements throughout the study corridor should be recommended to Village officials. Conceptual streetscape renderings shall also be provided. General guidance on how to most effectively partner with, and utilize the services of, the Jefferson County Land Reutilization Corporation should also be offered.
- *Yorkville Intermodal Terminal Spec Building Feasibility* – A general analysis of quality industrial space inventory in Eastern Ohio, the WV Northern Panhandle and Western PA should be offered. The terminal owner and local officials should gain an understanding of the general market demand for industrial buildings in the region and the likelihood of success (i.e. tenant attraction) should a spec building be constructed. Further, the landowner and local officials should gain a clear understanding of relevant grant and loan support programs, including but not limited to Ohio's Rural Industrial Park Loan Program (RIPL) and JobsOhio programs.
- *Analysis of Intermodal Terminal Water Service Assets* – The terminal contains a variety of private assets that powered the former steel mill – a Ranney well, two vertical wells, and a water treatment plant. A general engineering analysis should be conducted, resulting in an overview of the assets' ability to directly serve prospective large and heavy industrial users with non-potable water. Recommendations should be offered regarding marketing the water assets to targeted industrial sectors and/or individual companies.
- *Marketing Prospectuses* -- the selected CONSULTANT shall develop **two** marketing brochures that can be used by local leaders (via digital or print outlets) to market the Commercial Street Corridor as well as redevelopment opportunities throughout the Yorkville/Tiltonsville Opportunity Zone. The Yorkville Intermodal Terminal, including the ownership team's spec building plan and the terminal's many infrastructure and multi-modal transportation assets, should be a feature of the prospectus.

- **Tuscarawas County** – Opportunity Zone #'s 39157021100 & 39157022001 present a variety of industrial development, brownfield remediation and historic downtown development opportunities in the communities of Uhrichsville, New Philadelphia, and Dover. The selected CONSULTANT shall work closely with OMEGA staff and local officials to learn about current development obstacles and opportunities. The following deliverables should be the focus of the Tuscarawas County analyses:
 - *Overview of New Philadelphia and Dover Industrial Development Opportunities within the Opportunity Zone* -- Industrial expansion and/or attraction opportunities, including brownfield redevelopment strategies, should be the focus of this work.
 - *Downtown Uhrichsville and Trenton Avenue Industrial Expansion Strategies* – As the majority of Downtown Uhrichsville lies within the Opportunity Zone, the selected CONSULTANT should analyze community-led development projects in progress as well as recommend new development strategies. The selected CONSULTANT should specifically offer streetscape improvement recommendations along the 3rd Street Corridor, as this is an active City project. Additionally, the selected CONSULTANT will be expected to offer industrial development recommendations, including infrastructure expansion, at the US 36 / Trenton Avenue industrial area, as this is another key City economic development project.
 - *Marketing Prospectus* – the selected CONSULTANT shall develop two marketing brochures that captures the attributes of both zones to be used by local leaders (via digital or print outlets) to market the variety of development opportunities in the zones.
- **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 staff as well as with local officials on an as-needed basis.
- **Stakeholder Meetings** – The selected CONSULTANT in conjunction with OMEGA and local officials will organize and facilitate a minimum of two in-person stakeholder meetings during the course of this project.

1.4 QUESTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

Any questions concerning this RFP may be submitted by email on or before November 7, 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 November 14, 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>
October 18, 2022	Issuance of the RFP
November 7, 2022	Last day for submitting inquiries
November 14, 2022	Proposals due
December 6, 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. Interviews with short-listed firms may be conducted. 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 communities
- Familiarity with, and work experience in, Ohio's Appalachian counties
- Ability to complete Scope of Work within a ten-month period and within budget (maximum contract fee of \$195,400.00).

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.