

Posting Date: July 8, 2024
Broadband Consulting Services-Technical Assistance
PID No. N/A
Eastgate Regional Council of Governments
Response Due Date: July 31, 2024

Communications Restrictions

Please note the following policy concerning communication between Consultants and the Eastgate Regional Council of Governments during the announcement and selection process:

During the period between advertisement and the announcement of final consultant selection, communication with consultants (or their agents) shall be limited as follows:

All questions shall be directed to Economic Development Program Manager, Mark Ragozine, in writing by 2:00 P.M. **July 17, 2024**. Questions will only be accepted via email at (**mragozine@eastgatecog.org**). No calls will be taken during this process. All comments will be addressed on Eastgate's website by **July 19, 2024**.

Project Description

The Eastgate Regional Council of Governments is seeking to retain the services of a consultant to provide Broadband Technical Assistance for the three-county region (Ashtabula, Mahoning, Trumbull). A selection committee will then review the proposals and select from those bids the best proposal.

The selected consultant will then be commissioned to provide Broadband Technical Assistance with a focus on implementing ongoing projects, assisting with new project development, and addressing the remaining unserved/underserved communities within the region. Eastgate, along with its partners from Ashtabula, Mahoning, and Trumbull counties, will work in tandem with the consultant to ensure that these services are carried out during the contract period.

Contract Value and Term : Value not to exceed **\$102,400**. Contract after authorization to proceed will expire no later than **December 31, 2025**.

Prequalification Requirements

Demonstrated experience providing broadband planning services and technical assistance for government organizations. Vast understanding of state & federal funding sources for projects, and ability to work closely with internet service providers (ISPs). Engineering and/or project design and cost estimating experience.

Selection Subfactors

There are no selection subfactors for this project.

Estimated Date of Authorization

It is anticipated that the selected Consultant will be authorized to proceed no earlier than August 7, 2024.

Completion Schedule

- | | |
|---|------------|
| 1. Request for Proposals (RFP) Advertisement: | July 8th |
| 2. Preproposal questions deadline | July 17th |
| 3. Response to questions available | July 19th |
| 4. Proposals due: | July 31st |
| 5. Target award date: | August 7th |

Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Participation Goal

It is the policy of the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) that firms certified by ODOT as Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs) shall have equal opportunity to compete for and participate in agreements included in this request for Letters of Interest, either as a prime consultant or sub-consultant. The Consultant must use good faith efforts to include DBE participation. Consequently, the requirements of Title 49 CFR Part 26 will apply. The Consultant must ensure that the DBE firms participating in the agreement are performing a "commercially useful function" as defined in 49 CFR 26.55.

Suspended or Debarred Firms

Firms included on the current Federal list of firms suspended or debarred are not eligible for selection.

Terms and Conditions

The Department's Specifications for Consulting Services 2016 Edition will be included in all agreements selected under this request for letters of interest.

Compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

The Eastgate Regional Council of Governments, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (78 Stat. 252, 42 U.S.C. §§ 2000d to 2000d-4) and the Regulations, hereby notifies all bidders that it will affirmatively ensure that any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, all bidders, including disadvantaged business enterprises, will be afforded full and fair opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, low-income status, or limited English proficiency in consideration for an award.

Selection Procedures

Eastgate will directly select a consultant based on the Letter of Interest (LoI). The requirements for the LoI and the Programmatic Consultant Selection Rating Form that will be used to select the consultant are shown below.

Firms interested in being considered for selection should respond by submitting an electronic proposal via email to the below authorized representative **by 2:00 PM on July 31st**.

Mark Ragozine, Economic Development Program Manager
Mragozine@eastgatecog.org

Responses received after 2:00 PM on the response due date will not be considered.

Scope of Services

The Scope of Services document is included below.

Requirements for Letters of Interest, Programmatic Selection Process

- A. Instructions for Preparing and Submitting a Letter of Interest
 - 1. Provide the information requested in the Letter of Interest Content (Item B below), in the same order listed, in a letter signed by an officer of the firm. Do not send additional forms, resumes, brochures, or other material.
 - 2. Letters of Interest shall be limited to ten (10) 8½" x 11" single-sided pages plus two (2) pages for the Project Approach (Item B.3 below).

B. Letter of Interest Content

1. List the Project Manager and other key staff members, including key sub-consultant staff. Include team members for important disciplines and staff members that will be responsible for the work, and the project responsibility of each.

Address the experience of the key staff members on similar projects, and the staff qualifications relative to the selection subfactors noted.

2. Describe the capacity of your staff and their ability to perform the work in a timely manner, relative to the present workload, and the availability of the assigned staff.
3. Describe your Project Approach, not to exceed two pages Confirm that the firm has at least two years' experience performing the Scope of Services and Project Deliverables and address your firm's: 1) Technical approach; 2) Understanding of the project; 3) Qualifications for the project; 4) Knowledge and experience providing relevant services; 5) Innovative ideas.

Items 1 and 2 must be included within the 10-page body of the Lol. The remaining space within the ten (10) pages may be utilized to provide personnel resumes or additional information concerning general qualifications.

Consultant Selection Rating Form
for
Programmatic Selections

Project: Broadband Consulting Services
PID: N/A
Project Type: Planning & Implementation
Scoring: Selection Committee

Firm Name:

| Category | Total Value | Scoring Criteria | Score |
|---|-------------|-----------------------|-------|
| Management & Team | | | |
| Project Manager | 20 | See Note 1, Exhibit 1 | |
| Strength/Experience of Assigned Staff including Sub consultants | 40 | See Note 2, Exhibit 1 | |
| Firm's Current Workload/ Availability of Personnel | 10 | See Note 3, Exhibit 1 | |
| Project Approach | 30 | | |
| Total | 100 | | |

Exhibit 1 - Consultant Selection Rating Form Notes

1. The proposed project manager for each consultant shall be ranked, with the highest-ranked project manager receiving the greatest number of points, and lower-ranked project managers receiving commensurately lower scores. The rankings and scores should be based on each project manager's experience on similar projects and past performance for the Eastgate and the three-county region. Any subfactors identified should be weighed heavily in the differential scoring.

Differential scoring should consider the relative importance of the project manager's role in the success of a given project. The project manager's role in a simple project may be less important than for a complex project, and differential scoring should reflect this, with higher differentials assigned to projects that require a larger role for the project manager.

2. The experience and strength of the assigned staff, including sub-consultant staff, should be ranked, and scored as noted for Number 1 above, with higher differential scores assigned on more difficult projects. Any subfactors identified in the project notification should be weighed heavily in the differential scoring.

As above, other agencies may be contacted.

3. The consultant's workload and availability of qualified personnel, equipment, and facilities shall be ranked and scored on a relative, differential scoring type basis. The scoring shall consider quantifiable concerns regarding the ability of a firm (or firms) rated higher in other categories to complete the work with staff members named in the letter of interest.

Scope of Services

The scope of work to be performed by the consultant may include, but is not limited to, the following:

1. **Project Development, Identification, & Management.** Assist Eastgate staff and county partners in developing and identifying projects of regional significance that are competitive for local, state, and federal funding. Consultant will also be asked to work closely with Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to encourage expansion and further deployment of broadband infrastructure within the region.
2. **Alignment with BEAD.** Ensure that the Eastgate Region is well positioned for and in alignment with BroadbandOhio's Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) programs, including both infrastructure and digital equity opportunities.
3. **Funding Source Identification.** Align potential project proposals with other local, state, and federal funding sources (USDA, ARC, NTIA, etc.).
4. **Implementation of Previously Completed Strategies.** Continued implementation of the Eastgate Regional Broadband Feasibility Study and Connect Humanity Connectivity Plans.
5. **General Technical Assistance.** Work as needed to assist respective county partners with future and/or ongoing projects, providing expertise and guidance.