Request for Proposals (RFP) for the 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan

Issue Date:  September 13th, 2019
Closing Date:  October 18th, 2019

This RFP includes a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Goal of 14%

NOACA is seeking a qualified person or firm to contract for consulting services for the 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The deadline for submittals is 12:00PM ET on October 18th, 2019. Please read entire RFP for specific information and requirements.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. THE NORTHEAST OHIO AREAWIDE COORDINATING AGENCY (NOACA) ........................................ 3
2. BACKGROUND ...................................................................................................................... 3
3. SCOPE & PROJECT DETAILS ................................................................................................ 4
   I. Scope of Work – Project Tasks ........................................................................................... 4
      TASK 1 – PROJECT MANAGEMENT .................................................................................... 4
      TASK 2 – PUBLIC EDUCATION AND OUTREACH ................................................................. 4
      TASK 3 – GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND MEASURES/PERFORMANCE MEASURES ............. 5
      TASK 4 – NEEDS ASSESSMENT .......................................................................................... 6
      TASK 5 – ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ................................................................................. 7
      TASK 6 - 2045 LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN ADOPTION .................................. 8
4. COST ......................................................................................................................................... 8
5. PROCUREMENT TIMELINE ........................................................................................................ 8
6. SELECTION PROCEDURES ..................................................................................................... 9
   I. Requirements for Proposal Submittal .................................................................................. 9
   II. Proposal Content .............................................................................................................. 9
7. EVALUATION CRITERIA: ........................................................................................................ 10
8. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES AND CONDITIONS ....................................................... 10
9. COMPLIANCE WITH TITLE VI OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964 .................................. 13
10. COMMUNICATIONS AND QUESTIONS .............................................................................. 13
11. SUBMITTALS ........................................................................................................................ 13
1. THE NORTHEAST OHIO AREAWIDE COORDINATING AGENCY (NOACA)

The Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA) is a Cleveland-based transportation and environmental planning organization that serves as the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) and designated areawide water quality management agency for the counties of Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain, and Medina in Ohio.

In these capacities it:
- Works with other organizations to help address northeast Ohio’s transportation, air quality, and water quality needs.
- Conducts metropolitan planning for various modes of transportation, including vehicles, freight, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, etc., while considering the transportation system’s impact on the environment and land use.
- Prepares the region’s long-range transportation plan and short-range transportation improvement program, which is the region’s capital budget for federally funded transportation projects.
- Conducts studies that address congestion, improve safety and strengthen community livability.

The vision of NOACA is as follows: NOACA will STRENGTHEN regional cohesion, PRESERVE existing infrastructure, and BUILD a sustainable multimodal transportation system to SUPPORT economic development and ENHANCE quality of life in Northeast Ohio.

NOACA is directed by a 45-member Board of Directors, representing the City of Cleveland and all five NOACA counties and their communities, plus transit agencies, the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District (NEORSD), the Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority, the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA), and the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT). The NOACA region is home to 2.1 million people and over 150 units of government. The region is anchored by several urban core cities with the largest being Cleveland. More information about NOACA is available on our website at www.noaca.org.

2. BACKGROUND

NOACA, the designated MPO for the Cleveland-Lorain-Elyria urbanized areas, develops a long range transportation plan (LRTP) that promotes safe and efficient management and operation of surface transportation systems to serve the mobility needs of people and freight while fostering economic growth and development. The most recent LRTP was completed in SFY 2017 and will be updated in SFY 2021. The current plan, AIM Forward 2040, serves as a high-level policy directive for all NOACA’s work and is incorporated into every project and program. Beginning in SFY 2020, NOACA will work with member communities, regional stakeholders and the public to initiate development of a comprehensive LRTP that addresses the future of transportation, as well as planning activities related to ensuring equity, water quality, and air quality. Additionally, the LRTP will address the planning factors required under the current federal planning regulations, the national goal areas identified in the FAST Act and the Transportation Performance Measures (TPM) and target setting required by MAP-21/FAST Acts.”.

The CONSULTANT and the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA) will work to prepare NOACA’s 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The LRTP will be adopted by the NOACA no later than March 2021.
3. **SCOPE & PROJECT DETAILS**

I. **Scope of Work – Project Tasks**

   Task 1 – Project Management  
   Task 2 – Public Education and Outreach  
   Task 3 – Goals, Objectives and Measurements/Performance Measures  
   Task 4 – Needs Assessment  
   Task 5 – Environmental Justice  
   Task 10 – 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan Adoption

**TASK 1 – PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

The CONSULTANT will assign a single person to serve through the life of the contract as CONSULTANT Project Manager (CONSULTANT PM). The CONSULTANT PM must be the person identified in the selected firm’s proposal and may not be changed without prior written approval of the NOACA’s designated Project Manager (NOACA PM). The CONSULTANT PM is responsible for overall project management necessary to ensure the satisfactory completion of NOACA’s 2045 LRTP, on-time and on-budget, in accordance with the scope of services. The CONSULTANT PM will serve as a single point of contact and will be expected to ensure the CONSULTANT team is properly managed, adequate resources are available, submittals are timely and quality control reviewed, and disadvantaged business enterprise (DBE) firms, if any, are utilized for maximum benefit and paid in a timely fashion.

The CONSULTANT PM is responsible for the quality of all work completed under this contract and is expected to ensure high standards for all submittals, both draft and final.

The CONSULTANT PM will work closely with the NOACA PM to ensure strong communication and coordination through the life of the contract. Communication will include mandatory written monthly progress reports with an updated actual schedule versus planned schedule, task progress, identification of critical path tasks, and actual expenditures versus budget report. Beyond normal phone and email communication, the CONSULTANT and NOACA PM will generally be expected to meet in person monthly to review the progress report and monitor progress.

**TASK 2 – PUBLIC EDUCATION AND OUTREACH**

The CONSULTANT will develop a Public Participation Plan (PPP) for the 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan. The PPP will outline the process by which the public will be engaged throughout the development of the LRTP update, from inception to completion.

The PPP must provide appropriate opportunities for public participation and input during the LRTP update process. The CONSULTANT shall undertake outreach efforts to various populations within the MPO boundary. **NOACA will implement the other activities in the PPP that are not specified in this document.**

**WORKSHOPS**

The CONSULTANT shall prepare six (6) workshops during the course of LRTP update. These six (6) workshops must be held in the beginning of the project with the public and elected officials to solicit input regarding visioning, potential transportation improvements, all proposed projects, and to establish the evaluation criteria and the Goals, Objectives and Measures (GOMs). The CONSULTANT shall prepare the necessary material, exhibits, presentation, advertising, and
handouts for the workshops. The CONSULTANT shall arrange to take minutes and record verbal and documented comments from the public, staff and elected officials. The CONSULTANT shall include a copy of these records in the final 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan.

**Deliverables:**

- Monthly progress reports
- Monthly invoices
- Workshops

### 2.1 - Baseline Survey

The CONSULTANT will implement a statistically-significant baseline survey to be completed at the beginning of the LRTP process to gain insight into the public’s thoughts on transportation options and desired goals of the 2045 LRTP. Survey questions should be developed by the CONSULTANT with input from NOACA staff. Survey results should be communicated to the NOACA LRTP team early in the process, allowing the team to reach a diverse cross section of NOACA’s population. Key findings should be presented and delivered to policy makers who can make use of such input as they speak to their constituents and peers.

### 2.2 – All LRTP Documents/Materials/Publications

The CONSULTANT shall create a theme and branding consistent with the 2045 LRTP to produce education and outreach materials and publications that inform the public about the Plan and methods to provide input. The theme and branding should build on branding efforts of the 2040 LRTP, and should be included on all materials. Potential materials for the CONSULTANT to produce should include, but are not limited to: brochures, fact sheets, informational booklets, rack cards, and flyers. These materials should be branded with the NOACA’s logo, website, phone number, and other appropriate information. The CONSULTANT will translate any of these materials into Spanish upon request by NOACA. The materials produced should be easily useable by stakeholder partners in their own outreach activities e.g. eblasts, website and newsletters.

**Deliverables:**

- Public Participation Plan
- Baseline Survey
- Materials and Publications

### TASK 3 – GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND MEASURES/performance measures

The purpose of this task is to identify the 2045 LRTP goals, objectives and measures of effectiveness/performance measures (GOMs). The 2045 LRTP will look to implement new and innovative transportation system performance measure that de-emphasize traditional road “congestion” in lieu of broader desirable transportation outcomes. The update process will consider a wide range of social, mobility, freight, safety, infrastructure, environmental, energy, and economic factors reflected by the LRTP’s GOMs to identify future transportation needs. Transportation “needs” may go beyond infrastructure investments to include changes in policy and legislation necessary to support future investments.
The 2045 LRTP GOMs should further the vision set forth by the NOACA Board of Directors that NOACA will **STRENGTHEN** regional cohesion, **PRESERVE** existing infrastructure, and **BUILD** a sustainable multimodal transportation system to **SUPPORT** economic development and **ENHANCE** quality of life in Northeast Ohio.

### 3.1 – Evaluation Criteria

The CONSULTANT shall develop evaluation criteria based on the GOMs, community values and requirements outlined in MAP-21 and the FAST Act. The criteria will be used to evaluate and prioritize the proposed transportation improvement projects recommended in the Needs Assessment and FFP. Criteria will be both objective and subjective as appropriate. Examples of objective criteria include cost, Level-of-Service (LOS) and similar numeric assessments based on current or forecast conditions. Subjective criteria include quality-of-life measures, perceived value, consistency with the goals and objectives of partner agency plans, etc.

### 3.2 – NOACA Prioritization Process

The CONSULTANT will work with the PM and NOACA staff to develop a clear and defensible approach to project prioritization, documentation, partner process guidance/education piece on process, and recommend and develop a spreadsheet or database program to implement, create reports and maps. The prioritization process will consider GOMs, project readiness, type of funding required versus available, economic benefit analysis and other metrics as recommended by the CONSULTANT for consideration.

NOACA and its funding partners wish to incorporate resolutions of support and clear project descriptions (i.e., scope of work) for all projects included in the LRTP.

**Deliverables:**

- Goals Objectives and Measures Report
- NOACA Project Prioritization Process
- Develop Thresholds for Project Approvals

### TASK 4 – NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The Needs Assessment is an attempt to identify the transportation infrastructure needed to accommodate future travel demand and to address safety issues without regard to economic, local, or political considerations. In this task, the infrastructure need assessment must be aligned with and driven by a clearly defined set of strategic need assessment principles and be supported by a transparent, systemic, structured, interconnected and flexible methodological framework. The needs list will also consider measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the potential climate change impacts and health impacts on population of the transportation system (existing and with proposed improvements).

#### 4.1 – Analysis of Capacity to accommodate future growth

The CONSULTANT shall analyze the regional highway and transit assignment with the 2045 socioeconomic data to determine the deficiencies on the highway and transit networks that will occur by the Year 2045.

#### 4.2 – Evaluate Multimodal deficiencies and solutions

The CONSULTANT shall analyze a highway and transit assignment to the regional E+C Network with the 2045 socioeconomic data to determine the deficiencies on the highway and transit networks that will occur by the Year 2045.
4.3 – Waterborne Transportation Needs

The CONSULTANT shall assess the feasibility of utilizing the existing network of waterways to provide for the safe and efficient mobility of freight. This task will focus on Lake Erie and its three main regional tributaries – the Black, Cuyahoga, and Grand Rivers. The LRTP will identify existing and potential facilities and infrastructure projects that would provide for the maximum utilization of the waterways. This task should report the current condition of existing infrastructure both at port facilities and on intermodal connectors linking ports to the broader transportation network.

4.4 – Prioritization Process

The CONSULTANT shall apply the evaluation/prioritization criteria consistent with GOMS and earlier Tasks to rank projects by mode recommended in the Needs Assessment list of projects. The CONSULTANT shall work with NOACA staff to develop evaluation/prioritization criteria that can be applied consistently across various programs and overall LRTP.

**Deliverables:**
- Report – Needs Assessment

4.5 – Congestion Management Process (CMP)

Update the current NOACA Congestion Management Process (CMP) to prioritize congested corridors on the regional transportation network and determine the causes of traffic congestion and develop multi-modal transportation strategies to reduce congestion to allow for better mobility and accessibility across the region. NOACA will identify the congested locations/corridors in the region. The CMP should develop alternative strategies to mitigate congestion rather than building additional roadway capacity.

The development of the CMP will be an objective-driven, performance-based approach that addresses all elements of federal CMP regulations. It will incorporate Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSMO), Travel Demand Management (TDM), coordination of transportation and land use planning, goods movement, Complete Streets, safety, and transportation resiliency planning.

**TASK 5 – ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE**

The requirements of Environmental Justice (EJ), as outlined by the FHWA, are intended to ensure that the process of transportation planning identifies and addresses disproportionately high and adverse effects of the agency's programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations to achieve an equitable distribution of benefits and burdens. EJ is interrelated with the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which requires that no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. These provisions will be incorporated into the 2045 LRTP update, and adhered to throughout the public involvement task of this project. The CONSULTANT will coordinate with NOACA's Title VI/EJ policies and PPP.

The CONSULTANT, in close coordination with NOACA staff, shall perform an EJ analysis utilizing various data sources, such as the US Census and other demographic data using GIS, to consider the comparative impacts of proposed transportation projects on those populations. The CONSULTANT shall demonstrate through the EJ analysis that the proposed 2045 Financially Feasible Plan projects will not have a disproportionate adverse impact on low-income and minority populations and how it responded to concerns identified during the public outreach process.
**Deliverables:**
- Report – *Environmental Justice*

**TASK 6 - 2045 LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN ADOPTION**
The CONSULTANT shall perform work necessary to obtain final adoption of the 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan by the NOACA Board of Directors no later than March 2021. In order to achieve this goal, a conceptual approval is required by December 2020. The CONSULTANT shall prepare necessary presentation materials and handouts to explain how the plan was developed in accordance with the NOACA vision, community values and available funding sources. 

**Deliverables:**
- Report – Long Range Transportation Plan

**4. COST**

Consultant should submit a formal fee proposal and would be advised to have a proposed budget of no more than 1 page, including detailed project costs, by task, staff member, and estimated hours prepared in advance. If selected please be prepared to negotiate costs/budget based on this detail. Actual compensation is subject to contract negotiation.

**5. PROCUREMENT TIMELINE**

NOACA’s process and timeline for selection of a consultant are as follows:

**September 13th, 2019. NOACA 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan RFP Released**

**September 27th, 2019. Deadline for Question Submittal**
For questions regarding the RFP, please contact procurement@mpo.noaca.org. All questions must be submitted by email by noon on September 27th, 2019. All answers will be publicly posted on www.NOACA.org.

**October 2nd, 2019. Pre-Submittal Meeting 2PM EST. Q&A.** Please contact Susanna Merlone at smerlone@mpo.noaca.org if you plan to attend or need to schedule a virtual meeting.

**October 18th, 2019. 12:00 noon – Deadline for Submittals.**
Submittals must be received at NOACA by the above deadline. Digital proposals are to be submitted via e-mail to procurement@mpo.noaca.org, but NOACA assumes no responsibility for formatting or transmission errors. Submittals received after the deadline will not be considered. Please reference, “2045 Long Range Transportation Plan RFP” in email subject line.

**October 18th-24th, 2019 – Consideration of Submittals and Selection of Interview Candidates**
An evaluation team will select candidate(s) from submittals received for interview(s). This process will include review of submittals, references, and other information as necessary, as well as rating of submittals.

**October 24th, 2019 – Interviews with Selected Candidates (If Needed).**
Interviews will provide an opportunity for NOACA and selected candidates to further gauge their fit and ability to work with each other.

Please ensure that the appropriate representative, including the designated Project Manager, will be available to attend an interview if selected as a finalist. A digital meeting format such as, “Go to Meeting” may be utilized.
November, 2019. NOACA Committee Review Process

December, 2019. Approval of Contract by NOACA Board of Directors.

6. SELECTION PROCEDURES

NOACA will directly select a consultant based on the contents of the submitted proposal and interview, if requested. The requirements for the RFP and the Consultant evaluation are contained in this document.

Firms interested in being considered for selection should respond by submitting (1) copies of the Proposal electronically to procurement@mpo.noaca.org by 12:00 PM on the response due date listed above.

Responses received after 12:00 PM on the response due date will not be considered. Please ensure that the appropriate representative, including the designated Project Manager, will be available to attend an interview if needed (October 24th, 2019) if selected as a finalist. Interviews may occur via conference call.

I. Requirements for Proposal Submittal

Instructions for Preparing and Submitting a Proposal:

- Provide the information requested, in the same order listed, with a letter of interest cover signed by an officer of the firm. Do not send additional forms, resumes, brochures, or other material.
- Proposals shall be limited to forty-five (45) 8½" x 11" single-sided pages as contained below.
- Adhere to the following requirements in preparing your proposal:
  - Use a minimum font size of 11-point and maintain margins of 1” on all four sides.
  - Page numbers must be centered at the bottom of each page.
  - Use 8½" x 11" paper only.

II. Proposal Content

Qualifications of Firm and Staff / Project Management:

Team Personnel – List the Project Manager and other key staff members, including key sub consultant staff. Include personnel 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 sub factors noted. Provide resumes of each firm/team member along with a list of major services offered by each team member. No more than 10 pages.

Experience:

Provide detail of the firm’s qualifications as well as success with projects of similar programs, budgets, and/or clients. Describe the capacity of your staff and their ability to perform the work in a timely manner, relative to present workload, and the availability of the assigned staff. List significant sub consultants, their current prequalification categories, and the percentage and areas of work to be performed by each sub consultant. No more than 10 pages.

Project Approach:

Provide a description of your Project Approach. Address your firm's: 1) Technical approach; 2) Understanding of the project; 3) Your firm's qualifications for the project; 4) Innovative ideas; 5) Your firm's project specific plan for ensuring increased quality, reduced project delivery time and reduced project costs; 6) Schedule for completing the tasks. No more than 20 pages.
Refer to section 9. EVALUATION CRITERIA, Exhibit 1 for additional selection sub factors. The above items must be included within a not-to-exceed 45-page total body of the Proposal. Remaining space of (5) five pages may be utilized to provide any additional information concerning general and or unique project specific qualifications that you wish for consideration.

7. EVALUATION CRITERIA:

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<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Weight %</th>
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<tr>
<td>Project Approach: Exhibit 1, Note 1</td>
<td>35</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Management: Exhibit 1, Note 2</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Qualifications of Firm/Staff- Exhibit 1, Note 3</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td>Cost-Exhibit 1, Note 3</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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Exhibit 1 - Consultant Selection Rating Form Notes

1. **Project Approach** - Each consultant shall be evaluated based on the approach presented in the proposal to complete the project. Factors for evaluation shall include project schedules; demonstration of understanding for the project; methods and strategies to best accomplish the project; creativity; viability; and implementation. Proposals should clearly describe how each task or deliverable will be completed.

2. **Project Management** - 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 will be based on each Project Manager’s experience on similar projects and past performance. The NOACA selection committee may contact previous clients and outside agencies if necessary.

3. **Qualification of Staff** - The Proposal must demonstrate that the Consultant has the organizational capability and experience to complete the project. Identify the project team members, the role of the prime consultant, and any subconsultant(s). The rankings and scores will be based on the Staff’s experience on comparable projects and past performance for other agencies.

4. **Cost** - Total cost will be evaluated on a scale relative to the cost of all proposals received. The lowest-cost proposal shall receive the highest points possible, and each proposal thereafter will be weighted in comparison. The selection team shall review cost factors, such as billable hours, rates of pay and appropriate staff assignment relative to the complexity of each task.

8. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES AND CONDITIONS

A. **DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENTERPRISES (DBE):**

   It is the policy of NOACA, as required by the United States Department of Transportation (US DOT) that Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs) shall have equal opportunity to compete for this federally assisted contract and/or subcontract with another other consultant to perform the requested services. Consequently, the requirements of Title 49 CFR Part 26 will apply to this contract. If not a DBE itself, the Consultant must use its best
efforts to solicit from and to utilize DBE subconsultants with meaningful minority groups and female representation among their employees. The Consultant must ensure that the DBE subcontractor(s) is performing a "commercially useful function" as defined in NOACA policy.

**This proposal includes a DBE Goal of 14%.** At least this percent of the agreement shall be performed by certified DBE firms. The percentage goal may be met if the awarded Consultant is DBE certified.

Only firms certified as DBE through a State’s Unified Certification Program (UCP) will be counted toward meeting this goal. A listing of currently certified DBEs in Ohio can be accessed on the UCP website at [www.ohioucp.org](http://www.ohioucp.org). Potential DBEs may also access the website to obtain information on how to become certified. To qualify for certification as a DBE, an applicant must meet the eligibility standards established in the federal regulations at 49 CFR Part 26 and 13 CFR Part 121. DBE certification must be in place at the time of contract award and throughout performance of the contract.

The Consultant must document the progress and efforts being made in securing the services of DBE subconsultants. In the event the Consultant is unable to meet the DBE goal placed on the contract, a request for a waiver of all or part of the goal may be made to NOACA. The written request must indicate a good faith effort was made to meet the goal.

The Consultant's proposal must include the percentage of work to be performed by each DBE subconsultant, and a description of the work to be performed by each. Consultant proposals that do not include the minimum percentage of DBE participation noted above, or that cannot demonstrate good faith efforts to include DBEs, will be rejected. If selected, the Consultant's price proposal shall reflect the required level of DBE participation, or provide an explanation of how the requirement will be met in later phases of the work.

**GOOD FAITH EFFORTS**

The Consultant must document the progress and efforts being made in securing the services of DBE subcontractors. In the event the Consultant is unable to meet the DBE Goal placed on a project, good faith efforts to secure DBE participation must be demonstrated. The written request must indicate a good faith effort was made to meet the goal and be sent to the DBE Liaison Officer, NOACA Division of Programming, 1299 Superior Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio, 44114. There will be no extension of time for the project granted if the Contractor wishes to avail themselves of this process.

NOACA shall consider the following information and documentation when considering Good Faith Efforts (GFE) have been met:

1. Dollar value and % of DBE goal. Dollar value and % of waiver request.
2. Signed copy of each subcontract or purchase order agreement between the Consultant and DBE subconsultant utilized in meeting the contract goal.
3. Copy of dated written communication, fax confirmation, personal contact, follow up and negotiation with the DBE’s.
4. Copy of dated written communication and/or fax confirmation that bidder solicited and provided DBE’s with adequate information about the plans, specifications and requirements of the contract in a timely manner to assist them in responding to a solicitation.
5. Copy of dated written communication of each noncompetitive DBE quote that includes the dollar value of each reference item and work type.
6. Copy of dated written communication of DBE’s that were not interested in providing a quote for the project.

7. Documentation of all negotiating efforts and reason for rejecting DBE bids for service.

8. Solicitations made by the Consultant for subcontracting opportunities and DBE quotes through associations, networks, or other appropriate methods of announcement.

9. Documentation of GFE to meet the DBE subcontract goal, by looking beyond the items typically subcontracted or consideration of subcontracting items normally performed by the prime as a way to meet the DBE goal.

NOACA will review the submitted documentation and issue a written decision within ten (10) business days.

**COMMERCIOALLY USEFUL FUNCTION**

NOACA is required to monitor DBE Consultants and subconsultants to ensure they are performing a Commercially Useful Function (CUF) on the project. A DBE is performing a CUF when it is responsible for execution of the work of the contract and is carrying out its responsibilities by actually performing, managing, and supervising the work involved with the DBE’s employees. A DBE firm must have the proper North American Industry Notification System (NAICS) codes for the type of work they are performing. The DBE must also be responsible, with respect to materials and supplies used on the contract, for negotiating price, determining quality and quantity, ordering the materials and installation (where applicable), and paying for the work components itself.

**B. NONDISCRIMINATION**

Consultants agree not to discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, age, creed, sex, sexual orientation or national origin. Such action shall include, but not be limited to, the following: employment, upgrading, demotion or transfer, recruitment or recruitment advertising, layoff or termination; rates of pay or other forms of compensation; and selection for training, including apprenticeship. Consultants further agree to comply with all requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq., 49 C.F.R. Part 21.

**C.** All proposals received by NOACA in response to this RFP shall remain valid for 90 days from the date of submittal.

**D.** An RFP does not constitute an offer or a contract. No contract may be awarded without a resolution by the NOACA Board of Directors.

**E.** NOACA reserves the right to cancel or reissue the RFP or to revise the timeline at anytime. NOACA reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to waive minor irregularities in the proposal process. NOACA may accept any proposal if such action is believed to be in the best interest of the agency.

**F.** NOACA is not liable for any cost incurred by the proposer prior to execution of a contract.

**G.** The contract between the successful proposer and NOACA shall include all documents mutually entered into specifically including the contract instrument, the RFP, and the response to the RFP. The contract must include, and be consistent with, the provisions stated in the RFP.

**H.** The Consultant will be required to assume the responsibility for all services offered in the proposal whether or not directly performed by the Consultant. Further, the Consultant will be the sole point of contact for NOACA with regard to contractual matters.
I. The consultant project team shall be approved by NOACA. NOACA must approve any changes in the project team.

J. Consultant must show proof of liability insurance.

K. NOACA reserves the right to cancel or reissue the RFP or to revise the timeline at anytime.

L. Suspended or Debarred Firms
Firms or individuals included on the Systems Award Management (SAM) and Ohio Findings for Recovery as suspended or debarred are not eligible for selection.

9. COMPLIANCE WITH TITLE VI OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964

NOACA, 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.

10. COMMUNICATIONS AND QUESTIONS

For questions regarding the RFP, please contact procurement@mpo.noaca.org. All questions must be submitted by email and be submitted no later than 2 weeks prior to the due date, October 4th, 2019 at noon. Pre-proposal questions and answers provided are for informational purposes only and are not part of the RFP documents. If a question warrants a clarification, NOACA will issue an addendum addressing the request.

As described in item 5. PROCURMENT TIMELINE of this RFP, NOACA will host a Pre-Proposal meeting on October 2nd, 2 pm, to provide an opportunity for interested consultants to clarify any concerns they may have with the solicitation documents, scope of work and other details.

Please note the following policy concerning communication between Consultants and NOACA during the announcement and selection process:

- During the time period between advertisement and the announcement of final consultant selection, communication with consultants (or their agents) shall be limited as follows:
  - Communications which are strictly prohibited:
  - Any discussions or marketing activities related to this specific project.
  - Allowable communications include:
    - Technical or scope of services questions specific to the project or RFP requirements.

11. SUBMITTALS

All responses to this RFP shall contain the following sections in the following order:

1. Letter of interest
2. Abstract
3. Background and Experience
4. Project Staffing and Organization
5. References
6. Cost Proposal

And, optionally:

7. Supplementary and/or reference material
Submittals received for items 1-6, above, will be confirmed via email. Please call (216) 241-2414 if you do not receive an email response within 48 hours indicating that your submittal was received. Supplementary and/or reference material, may be submitted or referenced as a DVD, website, via FTP, or other media or means. Accessibility to any website or platform, including any login information and passwords must be provided. Such material or references, including authority to review such information (if client-proprietary, for example) must be made available by the procurement deadline indicated above. Any media that must be mailed shall be sent to the address below and shall be referenced in the pdf document containing Sections 1-6. (Any items mailed or sent via courier services must arrive before the procurement deadline to be considered as submission supplementary material.)

Proposal package should include the following:

1. **Letter of interest** – Must be no more than 2 pages and include contact information and authorizing signature.
2. **Abstract** – The abstract will consist of a summary of the highlights contained in the proposal and will be a maximum of one page.
3. **Background and Experience** – This section will include background information on the applicant’s organization and shall give details of experience with similar projects, placing a particular emphasis on map-based big data platforms. This may not be more than 5 pages. Samples of work performed by the applicant related to previously implemented projects must be submitted (either a website or other media, or as supplementary material discussed above).
4. **Project Staffing and Organization** – Must be no more than 10 pages in length. This section should outline the qualifications and relevant experience of key staff members proposed to work on this project. It should identify these staff members’ experience with similar projects, with a particular emphasis on big data and/or map-based software query applications and these staff members’ proposed roles on the project. Staff bios should be included in this section. After contract award, project staff changes must be approved by NOACA.
5. **Project Approach** – No more than 12 pages. This section shall discuss the vendor’s proposed project plan and approach that will be utilized to implement the scope of work outlined in this RFP, and include specific outputs and milestones.
6. **References** – No more than 1 page listing the most recent references from similar projects that include contact information.
7. **Cost Proposal** - The cost proposal must adhere to the requirements stated in Section 8, Exhibit 1, and Note 4.
8. **Supplementary and/or reference material** - Examples of past work performed for other clients that demonstrate the capability to develop a Long Range Strategic Plan.

Submissions must be made electronically by 12:00 noon on Friday, October 18th, 2019, using a PDF or Microsoft Office format. To submit the proposal, please email the proposal to procurement@mpo.noaca.org. If the proposal is a large file, greater than 65MB, please instead request the Dropbox site and password for posting the proposal materials.

NOACA supports environmental consciousness and discourages mailed submissions for this RFP. However, for material that must be mailed, use:

Susanna Merlone, Director of Administrative Services
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