



## **Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency**

NOACA  
1299 Superior Avenue  
Cleveland, Ohio 44114-3204  
(216) 241-2414  
[www.noaca.org](http://www.noaca.org)

### **Request for Proposals (RFP) for Preparation of a Corridor Identification and Development (Corridor ID) Application through the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)**

Issue Date: December 27, 2022  
Close Date: January 17, 2023

The Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA) is seeking responses to this request for proposals (“RFP”) in order to select a qualified consultant to assist NOACA in the preparation of Corridor Identification and Development Program (Corridor ID) applications through the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA).

## **SCOPE OF SERVICES FOR CORRIDOR ID APPLICATION:**

NOACA is seeking a qualified firm to contract for consulting services for assistance the preparation of application(s) to the Corridor Identification and Development (Corridor ID) Program.

NOACA wishes to submit five (5) corridors for inclusion in the Corridor ID Program (the NOFO affirms that applicants may submit applications for more than one Corridor, under separate submissions):

- The Cleveland-Elyria-Sandusky-Toledo-Chicago corridor
- The Cleveland-Buffalo-Rochester-NYC corridor
- The Cleveland-Pittsburgh-Philadelphia-NYC corridor
- The Cleveland-Washington, D.C. corridor
- The Cleveland-Toledo-Detroit corridor

## **DELIVERABLES:**

The consultant will prepare the complete applications for the five proposed corridors, including full responses to all application-required sections, including but not limited to: Cover Page, Corridor Summaries, Corridor Funding, Applicant Eligibility, Detailed Corridor Descriptions, Corridor Locations, Evaluation and Selection Criteria information, and Compliance with DOT Strategic Goals -- adhering to the application requirements and procedures outlined in the NOFO located here:

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2022/12/20/2022-27559/notice-of-solicitation-of-corridor-proposals-and-funding-opportunity-for-the-corridor-identification#print>

The grant application is due on March 20, 2023. NOACA requests these deliverables be completed one week prior, by 5 p.m. on March 13, 2023 in order to review and submit the application materials.

NOACA will work with the corridor partners, gather support letters, manage the intergovernmental review process, submit the application, and prepare the required reporting documents.

NOACA completed substantial work in 2015 and 2021 in previous proposals related to 1) the Cleveland – Chicago corridor, and 2) the Cleveland – Detroit corridor, which can be utilized in the development of the grant application.

## **CLOSING DATE**

Electronic proposals in response to this solicitation will be accepted until **5 pm on Tuesday, January 17, 2023**. Submissions shall be emailed to [procurement@mpo.noaca.org](mailto:procurement@mpo.noaca.org) and shall not exceed a file size of 30MB.

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR PROPOSALS**

### **A. General Instructions**

NOACA will not reimburse proposers for any costs incurred prior to award and execution of a contract, including but not limited to the preparation and submittal of proposals or participation in the evaluation and negotiation process.

Proposals should be comprised of two (2) volumes, submitted in PDF format. No price or price-related information shall appear in Volume I, the Technical Proposal.

Proposals shall clearly address the evaluation criteria and information requested herein. Overly elaborate proposals and proposals containing only generalized marketing information are discouraged and may result in a lower evaluation score.

Firms included on the current Excluded Parties List System maintained by the United States General Services Administration, or on comparable lists of suspended or debarred firms maintained by the State of Ohio or jurisdictions within NOACA's service area are not eligible for selection.

### **B. Requirements for Technical Proposal (Volume I)**

No pricing or price-related information shall be included in the Technical Proposal. The Technical Proposal shall include the following components:

1. Provide a cover letter identifying the prime consultant and all subcontractors, if applicable. The cover letter shall identify the officer or other responsible executive of the firm authorized to negotiate and agree to a contract, including the individual's title, address, telephone, email and facsimile. This individual shall serve as NOACA's point of contact for all communications regarding this solicitation. The letter should also contain a commitment that the proposed pricing will be valid for not less than 90 days.
2. Provide general information about the firm including location of office(s), number of years in business and areas of service expertise. Identify key management staff and a brief description of their qualifications and experience. Summarize the firm's number of full-time staff by discipline.
3. Describe the proposer's approach to the project, including a detailed scope of services that reflects understanding of the objectives of the Corridor ID Program and the specific project. If appropriate, the proposer shall expand on the scope of work and provide suggestions that will enhance the performance and outcomes of the project. This section should detail the tasks needed to accomplish the required services, and the strategies necessary to implement project recommendations. The project approach should highlight innovation and creativity. Provide a table, attached to the submission as Appendix A, that summarizes and breaks down the project's deliverables, percentage of work, and estimated time to complete. An example table is attached to this RFP as *Exhibit A*.
4. Identify key staff to be assigned to this project and the deliverables for which each individual will be responsible. Attach resumes that describe the education, experience and professional certifications (e.g. Professional Engineer) for each

key staff person. Highlight experience and education in transportation planning that relates to current methodologies applied toward meeting the Corridor ID Program objectives. NOACA reserves the right to approve or reject any staff members assigned by primary vendor to this project.

5. Describe the capacity of your team and their ability to perform the work in a timely manner, relative to the firm's present workload and the availability of the assigned staff. Include an organizational chart that illustrates the proposed project management structure.
6. List all subcontractors, identifying those certified as DBEs in the State of Ohio, and the type and percentage of work to be performed by each subcontractor. Include description(s) of subcontractor(s) qualifications, identify key personnel, and provide contact person with respective email and telephone number for any subcontractor(s). NOACA reserves the right to approve or reject any subcontractors proposed by vendor for this project.
7. Provide a listing of prior work on other projects that are similar in scope to this project. Examples should describe the scope of work, and demonstrate successful performance in project completion and in stakeholder engagement and community involvement. The list of prior projects should include assignments undertaken in the past five (5) years, and also identify the duration of the project and the client. Provide contact information (name, title, mailing address, email, and telephone) for each client on prior work examples. NOACA may contact references as well as other resources to verify a firm's qualifications, experience, professionalism, and ability to perform the work. If any such projects were not satisfactorily completed, provide an explanation of the circumstances.

### **C. Requirements for Business Proposal - Volume II**

The Business Proposal shall include the following components:

1. A copy of the cover letter included in Volume I
2. A pricing proposal, included in the submission as Appendix B. In the pricing proposal, hourly rates should reflect only the direct cost of labor, and not overhead, burden, or profit. Direct costs such as travel expenses, fixed-price payments to subcontractors or vendors will be reimbursed at cost. NOACA will reimburse travel and living expenses only for travel more than 50 miles from the traveler's ordinary work location, at the rates specified in the General Services Administration's most current per diem rates for the locality involved. A template for pricing proposal is attached to this RFP as Exhibit B.
3. Copies of the proposer's worker's compensation, general liability, professional liability and automobile insurance certificates, included in the submission as Appendix C.
4. The proposer may identify any proposed exceptions to NOACA's Terms and Conditions as contained in this RFP, or propose any additional terms it considers appropriate. Such proposed exceptions or additional terms must be specific, and include a clear explanation of the reasons for the exception or addition. Please note that certain terms contained herein are required by law or regulation and

cannot be modified.

## **EVALUATION CRITERIA AND PROCEDURES**

### **A. Evaluation Criteria**

#### **1. Experience/Qualifications (up to 40 points)**

Each consultant will be evaluated in regards to their experience and qualifications appropriate to the current project. Scores will be based on each firm's experience on similar projects. Factors to consider include:

- i. Experience and education of project personnel (including appropriate credentials such as education and professional certifications)
- ii. Relevant experience on projects similar to the current project, or projects that include applicable elements

#### **2. Project Approach (up to 40 points)**

Each consultant will be evaluated based on the approach presented in the Technical Proposal to complete the project. Factors to consider include:

- i. Demonstration of understanding the goals of the current project and the objectives of the program
- ii. Provision of a projected table of deliverables included in the Technical Proposal, including project components that will achieve the goals of the project
- iii. Methods and strategies to best accomplish all deliverables of the project
- iv. Creativity and innovation that will drive the process and recommendations

#### **3. Project Management (up to 20 points)**

Each consultant will be evaluated based on demonstration of past project management and performance. Factors to consider include:

- i. Demonstration of effective past project management, resulting in the delivery of a high quality work product
- ii. Project personnel/consultant firm size capable of managing planning process, or capacity to manage a consulting team and work with sub-consultants.
- iii. Ability to assemble and lead a multidisciplinary team and to collaborate with public, private, and non-profit partners, community stakeholders, and other relevant parties
- iv. Project approach that demonstrates how tasks or parts are coordinated, staffed, and completed

### **B. Evaluation Procedures**

NOACA intends to award a contract to the vendor whose proposal, including negotiated modifications, is considered to provide the best combination of technical quality and economic cost. Any proposals timely received by NOACA will be evaluated

by a team comprised of NOACA staff and stakeholder(s). The evaluation team will first evaluate the proposals according to the three technical criteria stated above. NOACA may ask vendors for clarification of their proposals, including conducting interviews and/or requesting that the proposers give oral/visual presentations. Such interviews may be conducted in person and/or by telephone or video conference. If such interviews are held, the evaluation team will re-evaluate the proposals, at which time some vendors may be eliminated from further consideration.

NOACA will then evaluate the remaining firms' pricing proposals. Additional firms may be eliminated at this point if pricing is considered inconsistent with their technical proposals. An excessively low price may be considered as unreasonable as an excessively high price.

NOACA may also negotiate with proposers remaining in the competitive range. Following such negotiations, NOACA may request the remaining firms to submit a Best and Final Offer, which will be evaluated by the team, with a firm then selected to be recommended for award. Award recommendation is subject to final approval by the NOACA Board of Trustees.

NOACA reserves the right to accept proposals other than the lowest cost offered, reject any and all proposals, or to negotiate separately with any proposer or proposers as deemed to be in NOACA's best interest. NOACA also reserves the right to waive minor informalities, irregularities or errors which do not affect the substance of the proposal, or may award on the basis of initial proposals received without discussions or negotiations with proposers. The original proposal, therefore, should represent the vendor's best effort to meet NOACA's needs at a reasonable price.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES AND CONDITIONS**

- A. NOACA, as an Equal Opportunity Employer, requires all consultants to affirm that they agree to abide by any and all applicable equal employment opportunity laws, whether state or federal, and to use best efforts to subcontract with Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs) when possible. It is recommended that consultants attempt to achieve 12% letting of subcontracts to DBEs. This complies with requirements of NOACA for its efforts at minority participation. 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, and agree to take affirmative action so that applicants are employed and that employees are treated during employment without regard for their 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 that they will insert the foregoing provision in all subcontracts in connection with services provided. 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.
- B. The proposal, including price, shall be valid for at least 90 days from the date of submission.
- C. An RFP does not constitute an offer or a contract.
- D. NOACA reserves the right to amend, cancel or reissue the RFP or to revise the timeline at any time.
- E. 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 including the contract instrument, relevant portions of the RFP and the response to the RFP. The contract must include and be consistent with the provisions stated in the RFP, as may be modified by negotiations.
- H. The prime consultant or system provider will assume the responsibility for all services offered in the proposal regardless of whether directly performed by the prime consultant. Further, the prime 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. Any award of contract will be to the consultant that provides the highest value relative to costs.

**QUESTIONS**

All inquiries and questions regarding this RFP shall be submitted to: [procurement@mpo.noaca.org](mailto:procurement@mpo.noaca.org). Responses will be publicly posted on [NOACA's website under About-Contact Us-Doing Business with NOACA](#).

## EXHIBIT A

*Example - Table of Deliverables*

<b>Deliverable</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>% Work</b>	<b>Time to Complete</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>100%</b>	

**EXHIBIT B PRICING**

Proposed Team Member Name or Work Classification	Base Hourly Rate*	Overhead Rate (%)	Burdened Hourly Rate

*\*Base Hourly Rates shall be quoted at cost, without overhead or profit.*

Expenses:	
Type	Estimated Cost

**FIRM FIXED FEE (PROFIT):**  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Signature:</b>
<b>Printed Name:</b>
<b>Title:</b>
<b>Company Name:</b>
<b>Date:</b>