



## **Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency**

### **NOACA**

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## **Request for Proposals (RFP) Transportation for Economic Development Initiative (TEDI) in the Aerozone District**

This RFP includes a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Goal of 12%

**Issue Date: September 20, 2023**

**Closing Date: October 18, 2023**

NOACA is seeking a qualified consultant to conduct a transportation and economic development study. The deadline for submittals is **Wednesday, October 18, 5:00 PM.**

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# 1. 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 48-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 (NEORS), the Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority, the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA), the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT), and the Ohio Turnpike Infrastructure Commission.

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](http://www.noaca.org).

## 2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Aerozone District is currently going through a major transformation where many of the above-mentioned anchors are in the process of making major independent investments. For example, the Hopkins Airport Master plan that could see as much as two billion dollars in the coming years focused initially on the passenger experience. The IX Center is being redeveloped and reimagined beyond just an entertainment venue. The Forward Innovation Center is developing 1.2M square feet of manufacturing, warehousing, and distribution centers to attract more companies and jobs, and NASA GRC is investing in new communication and research buildings, among other improvements. Unfortunately, the reality is that most of these developments are occurring independently without proactive coordination or integration. Furthermore, given the rapid pace of technological innovations, it is plausible to develop an innovation hub where foundation building blocks are strategically placed in the Aerozone District. The evolving future opportunities include, but are not limited to:

- Electrification of flight
- Expansion of energy storage and transmission
- Advancements in aviation and aerospace
- Drone based delivery systems
- Expansion of air cargo demand
- Supply chains

As part of these strategic initiatives, it is envisioned to create an Innovation District that will serve as a magnet for startups, technology companies, research institutions, and creative entrepreneurs. The district will be a place where knowledge and ideas intersect, and businesses can thrive through collaboration and access to cutting-edge resources.

## 3. SCOPE OF WORK

The selected planning consultant will be responsible for coordinating and promoting a set of plausible economic development opportunities and required transportation infrastructure and services to support long term economic growth and advance the vision and goals of NOACA's Long Range Plan, *eNEO2050: An Equitable Future for Northeast Ohio*.

The key components of the study goals are:

- **Reinvestment in Underutilized Properties:** Promote reinvestment in underutilized or vacant/abandoned properties, encourage mixed-use development, and allow flexibility to accommodate future growth. The required multimodal transportation system should be planned to support these investments to accommodate future growth.
- **Workforce Access & Mobility:** Develop a multimodal transportation system that provides more travel options for accessibility and mobility of people and goods by increasing user safety and positive environmental impacts. Consider innovative mobility solutions and sustainability to enhance placemaking within the district.
- **Innovation and Research Ecosystem:** Propose strategies and identify partners to attract innovation-driven businesses, research institutions, and startups, fostering a collaborative and dynamic ecosystem and achieving the NOACA region's emission budget.

- **Environmental Justice:** Ensure that the benefits and burdens of economic development, economic growth, and transportation projects are distributed equitably by integrating accessibility of environmental justice (EJ) areas<sup>1</sup>. Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) is a critical capability that eliminates potential barriers and provides equitable access to opportunities.
- **Community Engagement:** Facilitate a robust community engagement process involving stakeholders, residents, businesses, and organizations to gather input, establish priorities and ensure inclusivity. Engage the key stakeholders to gain their perspectives and buy-in.
- **Enhance Regional Cohesion:** Support collaboration between regional and the Aerozone district economic development partners and build upon efforts already underway in the district.
- **Economic Development and Investment:** Identify opportunities and partners for public and private investment, outlining the potential for job creation and economic growth. Support collaboration between regional and sub-regional economic development partners and build upon efforts already underway in the district.
- **Freight Reliability:** Attain FHWA targets for truck travel time reliability from/to the Aerozone district.
- **Safety:** Provide workers with safe and reliable transportation choices that enhance their quality of life and work. Propose transportation improvements that reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries in the Aerozone district over time.
- **Emissions:** Achieve the NOACA region’s emission budget.
- **Technology Adaptation:** Support the installation of (or “expansion of”) planned Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment (EVSE) in the Aerozone district and promote other technologically advanced modes of travel.

## Critical Elements

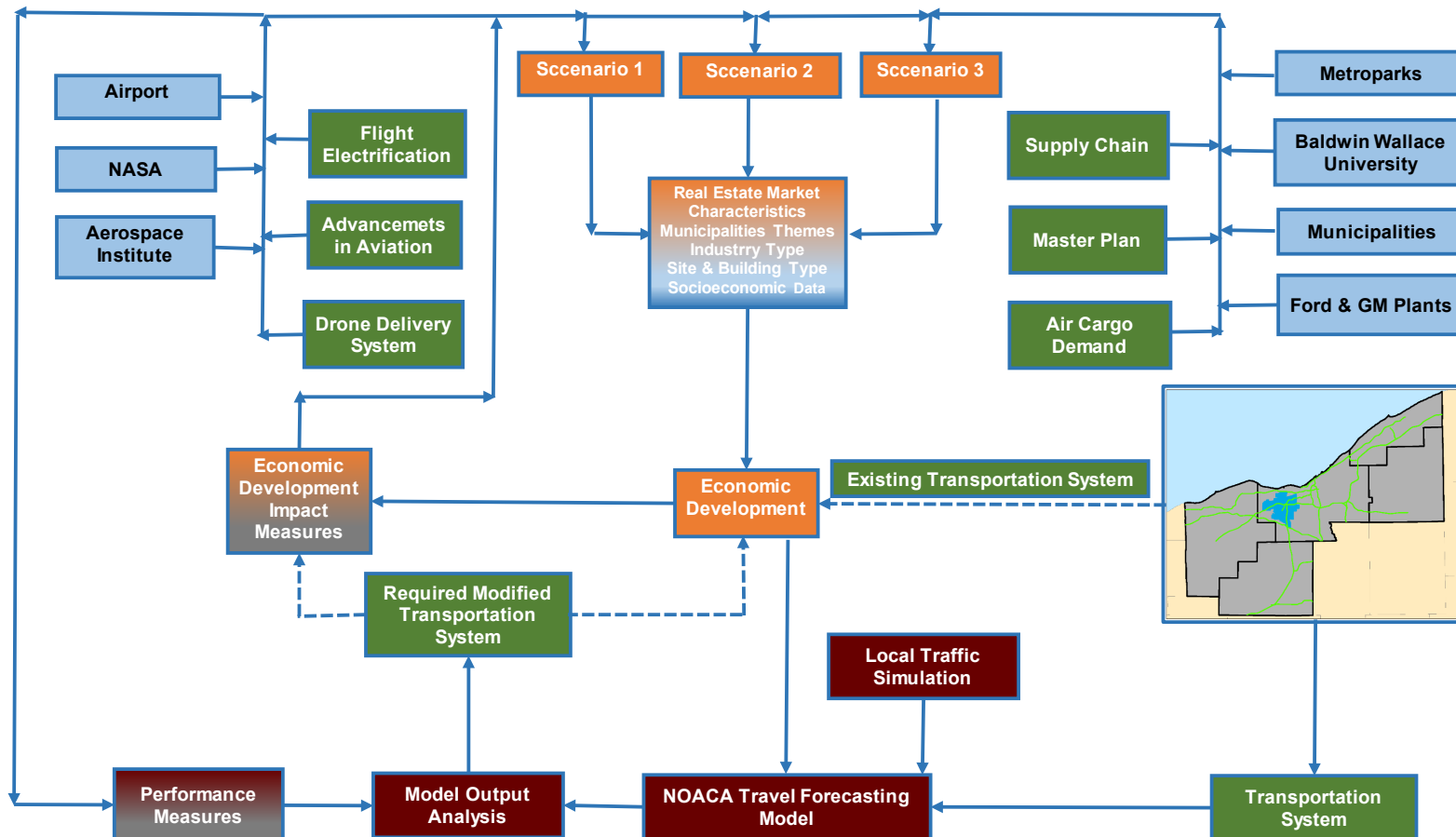
- Leverage and integrate with the existing plans of each of the district’s municipalities and major anchors to support and complement their efforts to develop a more cohesive system.
- Ensure that the voice of the industry is baked into the plan to address the most critical ‘pinch points’ for business attraction, job growth, and expansion of supply chains in the district’s key industries such as advanced manufacturing, aviation and aeronautics, logistics and distribution.
- Consider and evaluate the planned economic development and transportation infrastructure of the individual municipalities within the Aerozone district to support the study vision and goals.
- Economic development is related to the mobility of people and goods. In other words, there is a strong relationship between economic growth and the reliability and efficiency of the transportation system and the level of infrastructure investment. Any socioeconomically developed sub region should be supported by a multimodal transportation system that provides accessibility, mobility, capacity, and reliability in an equitable manner and achieves a set of minimum standards for pollutants.

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<sup>1</sup> Per its Environmental Justice Policy, NOACA’s Environmental Justice Areas are designated at the Census transportation analysis zone (TAZ) level, based on the percentage of a zone’s low-income or minority population.

## Diagram A: Economic Development and Transportation Interaction

Diagram A illustrates an iterative process of the interaction between economic development and the transportation system.



## **DATA COLLECTION**

Much like other transportation planning and economic studies, collecting information about the existing conditions of the Aerozone District is the essential first step. The Consultant shall gather information that includes, but is not limited to the following data points for the District. Data may be obtained from existing sources such as the [Aerozone Current Conditions Assessment](#) conducted by the Cuyahoga County Planning Commission (2022), or through Consultant's own research.

- Real estate market characterization of the Aerozone District based on the existing residential, nonresidential properties
- Summary of requirements and key themes identified by the municipalities
- Current socioeconomic data of the Aerozone District
- Existing sites and buildings in the Aerozone district suitable for economic development
- Existing industry types and the proposed future investment scenarios
- Environmental Justice (EJ) neighborhoods within the Aerozone District
- Major trip generation locations and trip attraction locations within the Aerozone District
- Major trip generation locations and trip attraction locations in the neighboring communities and municipalities which possibly impact or have a connection to the district
- Existing transit services throughout the Aerozone District
- Infrastructure inventory for motorized and nonmotorized modes of travel including highway and arterial lanes, signalized intersections, sidewalks, crosswalks, bike lanes, trails, etc.
- Number of current truck parking spaces and their locations in the Aerozone District
- Pavement conditions of the street network in the Aerozone District

### **First Set of Deliverables:**

- Provide a report of the collected information and data along with an executive summary.
- Create maps that identify proposed major transportation projects, infrastructure, current and planned developments, including projected timelines; current land use and zoning; key businesses; and other information.
- Develop a community engagement strategy that outlines roles, involvement, and responsibilities of stakeholders.
- Present the collected information to the NOACA Committees and Aerozone Board of Directors as needed.

### **Initial Stakeholder/Steering Committee Meeting:**

- Develop a list of stakeholders/steering committee members, and partners.
- Host a meeting to present existing conditions and gather feedback on issues relevant to stakeholders, and to discuss future public outreach to residents, employers, workforce, and municipalities.

## **Initial Public Meeting:**

Host a public meeting to present existing conditions to the public and to gather feedback on key issues related to investment scenarios, economic development, access, capacity, traffic, reliability, safety, transportation infrastructure, and livability.

## **EXISTING CONDITION ANALYSIS**

As noted, the [Current Conditions Assessment](#) prepared by the Cuyahoga County Planning Commission (2022) can provide valuable information for developing future economic development, land use, and transportation scenarios. The Consultant shall conduct an existing conditions analysis that builds upon the 2022 Assessment, and provides the following information for the District:

- Types of sites and buildings that have the highest business attraction/ expansion demand
- Return on Investment (ROI) for the proposed future investments
- Critical barriers that are holding sites from productive economic use and design interventions (e.g., funding, legal, political, etc.) to address the challenge
- Analysis of truck parking spaces based on truck Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) and Gross Domestic Product (GDP)
- Passenger and freight mobility trends within the district
- Quantify and qualify residential/employment access to transit services especially for EJ neighborhoods in the Aerozone district.
- Current pavement condition using the NOACA community pavement reports
- Access to major job hubs by motorized and nonmotorized modes of travel
- Transit station locations regarding major job hubs accessibilities within the Aerozone District
- Truck travel time reliability through the major corridors within the Aerozone district
- Crash data for the past five years in the Aerozone district.
- Traffic congestion locations, analyzed in relation to job hubs, mobility, road capacity, travel delay, travel reliability and safety
- Level of Traffic Stress (LTS) for bike riders and bike safety throughout the District's street network
- Pedestrian crosswalk locations in relation to major job hubs within the district.

## **Traffic Engineering Analysis:**

- Analyze the highways, arterials, and signalized intersections in the Aerozone district
- Develop a micro simulation model for all modes of travel in the Aerozone district.
- Conduct a traffic congestion analysis.
- Implement auto, transit and truck travel time and delay studies through the major corridors of the Aerozone district.
- Determine the percentage of through auto and truck traffic.

## **Accessibility and Mobility Analysis:**

- Quantify and qualify access to jobs and other employment related destinations in the Aerozone district by all motorized and nonmotorized modes of travel including walking, biking, transit and driving.
- Analyze person, auto and truck travel demand based on major trip origins and destinations.
- Determine the accessibility and mobility levels of the major highway and arterial corridors within the Aerozone district and neighboring areas.
- Analyze the transit access of the EJ neighborhoods to jobs.

## **ECONOMIC INDICATORS AND TRANSPORTATION PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

The general effectiveness of each economic development scenario and its required transportation infrastructure should be assessed based on a set of economic and investment indicators, and transportation planning and traffic engineering performance measures.

As shown in Diagram A, the Consultant shall develop a set of performance measures for evaluating economic development scenarios and transportation systems. The selected performance measures should include but are not limited to:

- Return On Investment (ROI)
- Economic growth
- Gross Domestic Product (GDP)
- Effectiveness of economic development location choice
- Major job hubs accessibility
- Congestion cost
- Percent of non-single occupancy vehicles
- Auto travel time reliability and delay
- Transit ridership and travel time reliability
- Average auto work commute time to all major job hubs
- Average transit work commute time from EJ neighborhoods to all job hubs
- Maximum Level of Travel Time Reliability (LOTTR)
- Maximum Truck Travel Time Reliability (TTTR)
- Daily Volatile Organic Compound (VOCs), Nitrogen Oxides (NOx) and annual direct Particulate Matter (PM)
- Daily vehicular trip share of electric cars and trucks and autonomous vehicles

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & LAND USE SCENARIOS**

Based on the data collection, existing conditions analysis and economic impact and performance measures developed earlier in the process, the Consultant shall produce three (3) economic development and land use scenarios.

The Consultant shall evaluate the viability of each of the proposed scenarios in relation to the following criteria:

- Current real estate market and related trends
- Socioeconomic data
- Economic development impact measures, economic growth criteria, livability and equitability
- Environmental impact
- Financial viability - develop a financial model and plan for the three scenarios
- Impact on transportation in terms of accessibility and mobility, and vice versa
- Existing and required transportation infrastructure and services
- Equilibrium between supply and demand for land

The study should consider three planning decades of 2024-2030, 2030-2040, and 2040-2050 for any economic development alternative evaluation, freight and passenger demand, and implementation plans.

### **Traffic Engineering Analysis:**

- Analyze the highways, arterials, and signalized intersections in the Aerozone district
- Develop a micro simulation model for all modes of travel in the Aerozone district.
- Conduct a traffic congestion analysis.
- Implement auto, transit and truck travel time and delay studies through the major corridors of the Aerozone district.
- Determine the percentage of through auto and truck traffic.

### **Accessibility and Mobility Analysis:**

- Quantify and qualify access to jobs and other employment related destinations in the Aerozone district by all motorized and nonmotorized modes of travel including walking, biking, transit and driving.
- Analyze person, auto and truck travel demand based on major trip origins and destinations.
- Determine the accessibility and mobility levels of the major highway and arterial corridors within the Aerozone district and neighboring areas.
- Analyze the transit access of the EJ neighborhoods to jobs.

### **Trip Generation Analysis:**

- Estimate the future trip generating growth based on the economic development/ land use scenarios.
- Develop person, auto, and truck trip matrices based on the selected economic development/ land use scenario for the Aerozone district.

### **Alternative Multimodal Transportation Solutions:**

- Identify alternative improvements for development of a multimodal transportation system based on existing conditions analysis, stakeholder, and public feedback.

### **Second Set of Deliverables:**

- Provide a report of all the completed analyses and alternative solutions along with an executive summary.

- Present a summary of all the conducted analyses to the NOACA Committee and the Aerozone Board of Directors as needed.

### **Second Stakeholder/Steering Committee Meeting:**

- Discuss the project findings with stakeholders.
- Identify preferred economic development/ land use scenarios and transportation alternatives.

### **Second Public Meeting:**

- Discuss the project findings with District’s residents, workforce, and employers.
- Solicit feedback from public stakeholder on project findings.
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### **ANALYSIS ADJUSTMENTS**

- Identify the most likely scenario of economic development/ land use for the Aerozone district based on the iterative process and analyses.
- Conduct any necessary additional analysis based on all feedback.
- Adjust the project findings related to economic development and transportation system according to the additional analyses.
- The project recommendations should be based on the conducted analyses and stakeholder and public feedback regarding the current and future economic development and transportation multimodal systems including but not limited to.
  - Real estate market and trends
  - Return On Investment (ROI)
  - Gross Domestic Product (GDP)
  - Economic development impact measures
  - Economic growth criteria
  - Environmental impacts
  - Travel time reduction
  - Capacity improvements
  - Congestion mitigation
  - Mode choice enhancements
  - Truck travel time reliability
  - Truck parking spaces by VMT
  - Safety and efficiency promotions
  - Transportation infrastructure improvements
  - Pavement and bridge preservation
  - Non-motorized network
  - Sidewalk inventory
  - Complete streets implementation plans
  - Improvements for nonmotorized modes of travel safety and accessibility

### **Final Set of Deliverables:**

- Develop a set of prioritized finalized recommendations with estimated costs and timelines for implementation.

- Provide a report that includes an executive summary in addition to all the public feedback, adjustments to the project analyses and recommendations.
- Present the recommendations to the NOACA Committee and Aerozone Board of Directors as needed.

### **Final Public meeting:**

- Present the project recommendations to the Aerozone District’s residents, employees, and employers.
- Adjust recommendations based on the final feedback.

## **DOCUMENTATION**

Prepare a detailed report including but not limited to:

- All collected data
- Scenario descriptions
- Stakeholder and public feedback
- Methodology of all analyses
- Project findings
- Project Recommendations
- Implementation Plan for each identified planning decade

## **4. QUALIFICATIONS**

The selected Vendor (or any of the selected Vendor’s subcontractors) cannot currently, or at the time of contracting, be listed on any federal, state, or local government jurisdiction debarment or suspension lists.

Qualified vendors should have expertise in transportation system and economic development planning.

## **5. PROCUREMENT TIMELINE**

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

**September 28, 2023, 11:00 a.m.** – Virtual pre-proposal conference for potential vendors. Email [Procurement@mpo.noaca.org](mailto:Procurement@mpo.noaca.org) for login information.

**October 18, 2023, 5:00 p.m. - Deadline for RFP Submittals**

Proposals shall be submitted in PDF via email to [procurement@mpo.noaca.org](mailto:procurement@mpo.noaca.org). NOACA assumes no responsibility for formatting or transmission errors. Submittals received after the deadline will not be considered. Please reference “Aerozone TEDI” in the email subject line.

### **October 2023 - Consideration of Proposals**

An evaluation team will select candidate Vendor(s) from proposals received. This process will include review and scoring of proposals, and review of references and other information as necessary. At the end of this process, NOACA will select the proposal it considers the most highly qualified, price and all other factors considered.

**November 2023 – Review and approval of contract by NOACA Finance Committee**

**December 2023 – Review and approval of contract by NOACA Board of Directors**

**December 2023/January 2024 – Execution of contract between NOACA and Vendor**

**January 2024 – commence work**

## **6. REQUIREMENTS FOR PROPOSALS**

### **A. General Instructions**

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

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. No pricing or price-related information shall be included in the Technical Proposal (Volume I).

Firms included on the current Excluded Parties List System maintained within the *System for Award Management* 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)**

The Technical Proposal shall include the following components:

1. A cover letter that identifies the prime consultant and any subcontractors known at the time of submittal. The cover letter shall identify the officer or other responsible executive of the organization authorized to negotiate and agree to a contract by name, title, address, telephone, and email. This individual, or a designee, 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 120 days.
2. General information about the organization including location of office(s), number of years in operation and areas of service expertise.
3. Description of the proposer's approach to the project, including a detailed scope of services that reflects understanding of the objectives of the Aerozone Project. If appropriate, the proposer shall expand on the scope of work and provide suggestions that will enhance the outcomes of the project. This section should detail the tasks needed to accomplish all the objectives of the project, and an estimated timeline (in terms of weeks

from contract execution) tied to the tasks in the scope of work. The project approach should highlight innovation and creativity, as appropriate. 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. A table template is attached to this RFP as *Exhibit A*.

4. Identification of 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 any professional certifications for each key staff person. Highlight experience and education relevant to the project. NOACA reserves the right to approve or reject any personnel assigned by the Vendor or subcontractors to this project.
5. Description of the capacity of Vendor to perform the work in a timely manner, relative to the organization's present workload and the availability of the assigned staff.
6. Listing of prior work on other projects that are similar in scope to the Aerozone project. Examples should describe the scope of work and demonstrate successful performance in project completion. The list of prior projects should include assignments undertaken in the past five (5) years and identify the duration of the project and the client. Provide contact information (name, title, organization, email, and telephone) for each client on prior work examples. NOACA may contact references as well as other resources to verify an organization's qualifications, experience, professionalism, and ability to perform the work. If any such projects were not satisfactorily completed, provide an explanation of the circumstances.
7. The Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Goal for this contract is **12%**. This means that at least this percent of the project work (in US dollars) shall be performed by Ohio-certified DBE firms. DBE certification must be complete and current prior to proposal submission. The required goal, as committed to by the consultant, will be enforced and monitored by NOACA for attainment. The link to the Ohio Department of Transportation's (ODOT) Unified Certification Program, which identifies certified DBE firms, can be found at the following location:

<http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/ODI/SDBE/Pages/DBE-Directory.aspx>

If the 12% DBE goal cannot be met, the consultant shall demonstrate and document good faith efforts to attain this goal prior to submittal of the proposal, in accordance with [49 CFR Part 26.53](#).

8. List of all known subcontractors, identifying those that are certified as Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) by the State of Ohio or another relevant agency with the authority to make such certification, along with 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.

## **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. The pricing proposal form is attached to this RFP for illustration as Exhibit B and can be downloaded in editable form [at this link](#). **Price quotes shall not exceed the budget of \$200,000.** In the pricing proposal, staff hourly rates should be broken down according to base hourly rate, overhead (%), and burdened hourly rate, which are listed separately on Exhibit B. Profit should also be broken out separately in the pricing proposal. Direct costs such as travel expenses, fixed-price payments to subcontractors or other vendors, supplies, and equipment rental 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.
3. Copies of the proposer's worker's compensation certificate for the jurisdiction where work will be performed and general liability, professional liability and automobile insurance certificate(s).
4. Completed form "Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension & Other Responsibility Matters," attached to this RFP as Exhibit C.

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.

## **7. EVALUATION CRITERIA AND PROCEDURES**

### **A. Evaluation Criteria**

#### **1. Experience/Qualifications (up to 30 points)**

Each proposer will be evaluated regarding their experience and qualifications appropriate to the proposed project. Factors to consider include:

- i. Experience with transportation system planning and traffic engineering
- ii. Experience with regional and sub-regional economic development planning
- iii. Experience with land use planning
- iv. Experience with transportation infrastructure cost-analysis and financing
- v. Experience conducting socioeconomic studies

## **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 and objectives of the proposed project
- ii. Quality and completeness of a projected table of deliverables included in the Technical Proposal, including identification of project components that will achieve the objectives of the project
- iii. Methods and strategies to best accomplish all deliverables of the project, including the proposed schedule.
- iv. Creativity and innovation

## **3. Project Management (up to 30 points)**

Each consultant will be evaluated based on the presentation of a management plan that ensures services are successfully completed. Factors to consider include:

- i. Demonstration of effective past project management, resulting in the delivery of a high-quality work product
- ii. Capacity to manage the project meet deliverables according to defined timeline
- iii. Description of performance evaluation methodology that monitors for achievement of project goals and objectives throughout the duration of the project
- iv. Description of status reporting methodology, including details of both written and oral reporting
- v. Project approach that demonstrates how tasks or parts are coordinated, staffed, and completed
- vi. Identification of potential risks, and steps that can be taken to prevent or mitigate those risks

## **4. Project Budget and Cost (not scored)**

Price quotes shall not exceed the budget of \$200,000. Points are not awarded for this category, but NOACA may consider cost reasonableness during the evaluation process.

## **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 cost. A team comprised of NOACA staff will evaluate any proposals received by the deadline. The evaluation team will first evaluate the proposals according to the technical criteria stated above. NOACA may ask Vendors for clarification of their proposals; conduct interviews; or request that proposers give presentations. Such interviews may be conducted in person, by telephone or through video conference. If such interviews are held, the evaluation team will re-evaluate the proposals, at which time they may eliminate some Vendors from further consideration.

NOACA may negotiate with proposers that remain in the competitive range. Following such negotiations, NOACA may request that the remaining firms submit a Best and Final Offer, which

the team will evaluate. The team may then recommend that firm for award. Any contract that exceeds \$50,000 in cost is subject to final approval by the NOACA Board of Directors.

NOACA reserves the right to accept proposals other than the lowest cost offered, reject 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.

## 8. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES AND CONDITIONS

- A. 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 good faith efforts to solicit from and to utilize DBE subcontractors 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's Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

This proposal includes a DBE Goal of 12%. At least this percent of the agreement shall be performed by certified DBE firms. The percentage goal may be met if the awarded Contractor is DBE certified. However, in the event the Consultant is unable to meet the DBE goal placed on this project, a good faith effort must be demonstrated, which documents the effort made to secure the services of DBE subcontractors prior to the submittal of a proposal. This documentation must be included with the proposer's submittal. Consultant proposals that do not include the minimum percentage of DBE participation noted above, or that cannot demonstrate good faith efforts to include a DBE, will be rejected. The Consultant's price proposal shall reflect the required level of DBE participation.

Only firms certified as DBE through Ohio's Unified Certification Program (UCP) will be counted toward meeting this goal. A directory of certified DBEs in Ohio can be accessed on the UCP website at:

<https://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/ODI/SDBE/Pages/DBE-Directory.aspx>.

Potential DBEs may also access the website [www.ohiucp.org](http://www.ohiucp.org) 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 proposal submittal and throughout performance of the contract.

- B. 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. The proposal, including price, shall be valid for at least 120 days from the date of submission.
- 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 amend, cancel or reissue the RFP or to revise the timeline at any time.

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 Vendor will assume the responsibility for all services offered in the proposal regardless of whether directly performed by the prime Vendor. Further, the prime Vendor 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 Vendor that provides the highest value relative to costs.

## 9. QUESTIONS

For questions regarding the RFP, please contact [procurement@mpo.noaca.org](mailto:procurement@mpo.noaca.org). Submitting questions early in the process provides NOACA the opportunity to respond; questions received near the deadline may not receive a response. All answers will be publicly posted on [NOACA's website under About-Contact Us-Doing Business with NOACA](#).

A virtual pre-proposal conference for potential vendors will be held on Thursday, September 28, 2023 at 11:00 a.m. For meeting login information, please email [procurement@mpo.noaca.org](mailto:procurement@mpo.noaca.org).

Exhibit A - Example Table of Deliverables

Deliverable	Description	% Work	Time to complete (weeks)
<b>Total</b>		<b>100%</b>	



## Exhibit C – Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension & Other Responsibility Matters

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This Certification is required to be submitted to NOACA on behalf of the principal bidder/proposer and all subcontractors whose subcontracts are reasonably anticipated to exceed \$25,000 in value.

- A. The undersigned Bidder/Proposer/Subcontractor ("Attester") certifies to the best of its knowledge and belief that the Attester and/or any of its principals or subcontractors:
1. Are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from covered transactions by any Federal department or agency;
  2. Have not, within a three-year period preceding this bid/proposal, been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against them for commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain or performing a public (Federal, State or Local) transaction or contract or subcontract; violation of Federal or State antitrust statutes, or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements or receiving stolen property; and
  3. Are not presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (Federal, State or local) with commission of any of the offenses enumerated in Paragraph 2 above; and
  4. Have not, within a three-year period preceding this bid/proposal, had one or more public transactions (Federal, State or local) terminated for cause or default by any federal, state or local agency.

"Principals" for the purposes of this certification, means officers, directors, owners, partners, and persons having primary management or supervisory responsibilities within a business entity (e.g., general manager, plant manager, head of a subsidiary, division, or business segment, and similar positions).

This certification concerns a matter which may be within the jurisdiction of an agency of the United States and the making of a false, fictitious, or fraudulent certification may render the maker subject to prosecution under Section 1001, Title 18, United States Code.

- B. The Attester shall provide immediate written notice to NOACA's Procurement Officer if, at any time, the Attester learns that its certification was erroneous when submitted or has become erroneous by reason of changed circumstances.
- C. A certification that any of the items in Paragraph A exists will not necessarily result in withholding of an award under this solicitation. However, the certification will be considered in connection with a determination of the Attester's responsibility. Failure of the Attester to furnish a certification or provide such additional information as requested by NOACA may render the Attester non-responsible, and the Attester shall not be considered for award.
- D. Nothing contained in the foregoing shall be construed to require establishment of a system of records in order to render, in good faith, the certification required by Paragraph A. The

knowledge and information of an Attester is not required to exceed that which is normally possessed by a prudent person in the ordinary course of business dealings.

- E. The certification in Paragraph A is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when making award. If it is later determined that the Attester rendered an erroneous certification, in addition to other remedies available to NOACA, NOACA may terminate the contract resulting from this solicitation for default.

If the Attester is unable to attest to any of the statements in this certification, it shall attach an explanation.

THE UNDERSIGNED CERTIFIES OR AFFIRMS THE TRUTHFULNESS AND ACCURACY OF THE CONTENTS OF THE STATEMENTS SUBMITTED ON OR WITH THIS CERTIFICATION AND UNDERSTANDS THAT THE PROVISIONS OF 31 U.S.C. SECTIONS 3801 ET. SEQ. ARE APPLICABLE THERETO.

Executed this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_.

Name of Bidder/Proposer: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Authorized Official: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name of Official \_\_\_\_\_ Title of Official \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_