



**Request for Proposals (RFP) for
As-Required
Engineering, Design & Planning
Consulting Services**
(Revised February 20, 2024)

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Closing Date: March 8, 2024

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¹ Revised February 20, 2024 to correct for a formatting error in section headings.

1. ABOUT 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 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.

2. BACKGROUND

As a metropolitan planning organization, NOACA is designated as the regional recipient of various sources of funding from the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA). These federal programs include, among others, the Consolidated Planning Grant² (CPG) Program; the [Surface Transportation Block Grant \(STBG\)](#) Program; the [Transportation Alternatives \(TA\)](#) Program; the [Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality \(CMAQ\)](#) Program; and the [Carbon Reduction Program \(CRP\)](#). NOACA is also a recipient of [Climate Pollution Reduction Grant \(CPRG\)](#) Program funds from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The above-referenced sources of funding are utilized by NOACA and its constituents to implement transportation planning and capital projects in municipalities and counties throughout its five-county area of responsibility. In some cases, NOACA serves as the administrator and sub-grants the funds to its member communities. However, NOACA also may serve as the direct recipient of the funds, utilizing them for agency project implementation.

² Consolidated Planning Grant funds are comprised of Federal Highway Administration Planning (PL) funds and Federal Transit Administration Section 5303 funds and are allocated to Ohio MPOs by the Ohio Department of Transportation.

3. SCOPE OF WORK

In relation to its role as both administrator and recipient of federal transportation funds, NOACA is seeking one or more qualified firms to provide transportation engineering, design, planning and related advisory and consulting services on a task order basis for a period of two years. This will provide NOACA with support when technical components of projects and programs exceed its core capabilities. Assignments made during the contract period may extend beyond the end of the contract period. NOACA reserves an option to extend the contract for a third year.

The scope of work, which shall be engaged on a task-order basis, includes but is not limited to the following types of services:

- Assistance and advice in the technical components of grant application opportunities and in the preparation and submittal of grant applications
- Development or review of preliminary project budgets or cost estimates for planning studies for roadway, signal, bridge, transit, rail, and active (bike, pedestrian, etc.) modes of transportation
- Development or review of design plans for projects including, but not limited to, roadway, signal, bridge, transit, rail, and active transportation infrastructure
- Development or review of construction level cost estimates for projects including but not limited to roadway, signal, bridge, transit, rail, and active transportation infrastructure
- Development or review of scopes of services for procurement of transportation planning and construction-related contracts
- Provision of transportation planning services
- Assistance in the procurement process, including attendance at pre-proposal/pre-bid meetings, providing response to vendor questions, and evaluation of proposals from prospective vendors
- Support or management of construction projects let by NOACA in alignment with the [Ohio Department of Transportation's \(ODOT\) Local Public Agency \(LPA\) Procedures](#)
- Development of grant applications for transportation planning or infrastructure construction projects

4. CONSULTANT QUALIFICATIONS

The selected consultant(s) shall have an active listing on [ODOT's Contractor Prequalification & Certification list](#) for the relevant work categories which align with tasks listed in Section 3 - *Scope of Work*. Firms may use prequalified subconsultants as needed. Any use of subcontractors shall be reviewed and approved by NOACA.

The selected consultant(s) should be familiar with the federal procurements requirements, specifically but not limited to 2 CFR Part 200; and ODOT's Local Public Agency (LPA) procedures, and able to support NOACA if NOACA is the LPA for a local let construction project.

The selected consultant shall have expertise across a broad range of professional engineering and planning disciplines through its own staff or subconsultants, including:

- licensed professional engineering and architecture

- environmental assessment
- transportation planning
- transportation planning and construction cost estimation
- transportation construction management

5. PROCUREMENT TIMELINE AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

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

March 8, 2024, 5:00 PM - Deadline for RFP Submittals

Submittals must be received at NOACA by the above deadline. Proposals shall be submitted in PDF via email to procurement@mpo.noaca.org. NOACA assumes no responsibility for formatting or transmission errors omissions. Submittals received after the deadline will not be considered. Please reference "Engineering, Design & and Planning Services" in the email subject line.

March - April 2024 - Consideration of Submittals

An evaluation team will select candidate vendor(s) from submittals received. This process will include review and scoring of proposals, and review of references and other information as necessary. Candidate vendors may be interviewed by the team and asked to participate in negotiations as part of the selection process.

April - May 2024 – Execute contract and commence work

6. 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.

Proposers shall submit a *Technical Proposal* in PDF format. The proposal shall be developed according to the instructions provided in this RFP and clearly address the 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

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

1. A cover letter identifying the prime consultant and anticipated subconsultants, if known. 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, and email. 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 proposal will be valid for not less than 120 days.
2. Information about the firm including types of service provision and specialized areas of expertise as they relate to scope of work for this RFP; location(s) of office(s); and number of years in business.
3. Resumes for proposer's or subconsultant's key staff members expected to be available for assignments which include their education, applicable experience and professional certifications. NOACA reserves the right to approve or reject any prime or sub-consultant personnel proposed for any assignment.
4. Organization chart that illustrates the firm's management structure as it would relate to anticipated assignments under this project.
5. If applicable, list of potential subconsultants. Include description(s) of the Subconsultant's area(s) of qualifications and experience. NOACA reserves the right to approve or reject any subconsultant proposed for any task under this project.
6. List of prior work on engagements similar in scope to that which is described in *Section 2 – Background* and *Section 3 – Scope of Work* of this RFP. Please provide at least three references for relevant engagements which address project management criteria that include but are not limited to:
 - Quality of work product
 - Adhering to schedules and deadlines
 - Controlling cost and adhering to the budget

- Communication, cooperation, and follow-through skills
7. Copies of the proposer's worker's compensation certificate and general liability, professional liability and automobile insurance certificate(s)
 8. Completed form "Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension & Other Responsibility Matters," attached to this RFP.

The proposer may identify any proposed exceptions to any portion of this RFP or propose any additional terms or conditions 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.³

7. EVALUATION CRITERIA AND PROCEDURES

A. Evaluation Criteria

1. Experience/Qualifications (up to 35 points)
Each consultant will be evaluated in regard to the following criteria:
 - a) Number similar engagements undertaken within the past five years
 - b) Types of projects and tasks completed for similar engagements within the past five years

2. Available Staffing (up to 35 points)
The proposal will be evaluated as to the vendor's staffing plan with regard criteria that includes but is not limited to:
 - a) Range of professional disciplines covered by firm's personnel
 - b) Qualifications and certifications of assigned staff in relation to *Section 3, Scope of Work*
 - c) Availability of personnel in relation to the firm's total workload

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:
 - a) Demonstration of effective past project management, resulting in the delivery of a high-quality work product
 - b) Capacity to manage multiple tasks and projects and meet deliverables within client deadlines
 - c) Description of performance evaluation methodology that monitors for achievement of goals and objectives throughout the duration of the engagement
 - d) Description of status reporting methodology, including details of both written and oral reporting
 - e) Clear description of how tasks or project components are coordinated, staffed, and completed.
 - f) Identification of potential risks, and steps that can be taken to prevent or mitigate those risks

³ This paragraph revised February 20, 2024 for clarity of meaning.

B. Evaluation Procedures

NOACA intends to award a contract to the vendor whose proposal, including negotiated modifications, is considered to provide the best technical quality across the spectrum of anticipated services. Proposals timely received by NOACA will be evaluated by a team comprised of NOACA staff. The evaluation team will evaluate the proposals according to the technical criteria stated above. NOACA may ask vendors for clarification of their proposals, including conducting interviews in person or by telephone or video conference, and/or requesting that the proposers give oral/visual presentations or request modifications to proposals. The evaluation team will re-evaluate the proposals, and select a firm for award, subject to agreement on contract terms and conditions. Award recommendation is subject to final approval by the Executive Director and, as applicable, by the NOACA Board of Trustees.

NOACA reserves the right to reject any or 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. NOACA also reserves the right to procure services within the general scope of this contract from others, as it determines appropriate.

8. ASSIGNMENT PROCEDURES

For each assignment to be made hereunder, NOACA will prepare and send to the consultant a request for a technical and pricing proposal. The proposal shall include the scope of services, schedule, work plan and identification of key personnel. NOACA's request will specify the proposed pricing structure, and vendor shall provide in a format to be provided by NOACA.

Direct costs such as travel expenses, materials, fixed-price payments to subcontractors or other necessary services will be reimbursed at cost. NOACA will reimburse travel expenses only for travel more than 50 miles from the traveler's ordinary work location, and at the rates specified in the Federal General Services Administration's most current per diem rates for the locality involved.

The parties may discuss the proposal and, if accepted, NOACA will prepare and issue a task order to the consultant. Should the consultant identify a potential organizational conflict of interest (as defined in Chapter VI, Section 2a.(4)(h) of [FTA Circular 4220.1F](#)) regarding any proposed assignment, it shall promptly notify NOACA, which shall determine whether the potential conflict will preclude the consultant from performing the assignment, in which case it may procure the work from another firm.

9. INITIAL ASSIGNMENT

NOACA anticipates that initial assignments under this contract may include various activities related to the agency's [Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative \(TLCI\)](#) program, and review of cost estimates for projects included in NOACA's upcoming Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) development.

10. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES AND CONDITIONS

- A. 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.
- B. The terms of the proposal shall be valid for at least 120 days from the date of submission.
- C. An RFP does not constitute an offer or a contract. No contract may be awarded without approval by the NOACA Executive Director and, if applicable, a resolution by the NOACA Board of Directors.
- D. 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 or 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.
- E. NOACA is not liable for any cost incurred by the proposer prior to execution of a contract.
- F. 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 shall include and be consistent with the provisions stated in the RFP, as may be modified by negotiations.
- G. The prime Vendor will assume responsibility for all services required by the contract regardless of whether directly performed by the prime Vendor. Further, the prime Vendor will be the sole point of contact for NOACA regarding all contractual matters.
- H. The consultant project team shall be approved by NOACA. NOACA must approve any changes in the project team.
- I. Any award of a contract or task order will be based on the highest technical value relative to costs.

11. QUESTIONS

For questions regarding the RFP, please contact procurement@mpo.noaca.org. Questions should be submitted as early as possible in the posting period, or NOACA cannot guarantee response to questions by the proposal deadline. All addendums to this RFP and responses to questions will be publicly posted on

<https://www.noaca.org/about/contact-us/doing-business-with-noaca>.

CERTIFICATION REGARDING DEBARMENT, SUSPENSION & OTHER RESPONSIBILITY MATTERS

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 certify to any of the statements in this certification, it shall attach an explanation to this certification.

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 _____