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## CONSULTANT SERVICES PROGRAM: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ) FOR COMMUNITIES

MID-OHIO REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

The Consultant Services Program streamlines the Requests for Proposal (RFP) process for MORPC member communities by prequalifying consultants for long-range planning projects, drafting Requests for Proposals on behalf of the community's project goals, interests, and budgets, creating a central repository for long-range planning RFPs, conducting initial reviews of Proposal Submissions, facilitating final presentations of proposals, and drafting/managing the project's contracts.

The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) is Central Ohio's regional council with more than 80 local governments and community partners. We take pride in bringing communities of all sizes and interests together to collaborate on best practices and plan for the future growth and sustainability of our region.

The following is a list of frequently asked questions related to the assistance provided to communities. If you cannot locate an answer to a question you may have, please contact the Consultant Services Program ([consultantservices@morpc.org](mailto:consultantservices@morpc.org)).

***This document will be updated as new questions are received.***

*Updated: February 5, 2024*

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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ) COMMUNITIES

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*\*Updated: February 5, 2024*

**1. WHY DID MORPC INITIATE THE CONSULTANT SERVICES PROGRAM?**

The Consultant Services Program was created to break down some of the barriers that may be preventing communities from engaging in high-quality long-range planning activities.

Many jurisdictions lack the staff time to devote to the RFP process. Simultaneously, communities may not receive many proposals because consultants do not have adequate staff time to devote the extensive searches required to locate available RFPs.

This program is designed to address these fragmented RFP processes, so that both communities and consultants can mutually benefit from a streamlined process.

**2. HOW DOES THE CONSULTANT SERVICES PROGRAM ASSIST COMMUNITIES?**

The Consultant Services Program is designed to assist communities by breaking down barriers in the Request for Proposals (RFP) process. Communities who wish to engage in long-range planning with the assistance of consulting firms often face internal obstacles which may prevent them from being able to move forward with various projects. Such obstacles may include a lack of staff time that can be devoted to the RFP process (writing and advertising the RFP, reviewing submitted proposals, conducting presentations and interviews for final selections, and managing the administration of the contract itself).

To provide assistance to communities, the Consultant Services Program is intended to provide in-kind assistance with these procedural tasks. Through the Program, MORPC provides services such as:

- Formulating the RFPs through community-provided information;
- Advertising the RFPs through a centralized RFP clearinghouse to generate more RFP responses to secure the best proposal possible;
- Prequalifies consultants to ensure that proposals are submitted by firms with the proper qualifications and experience;
- Conducts the initial reviews so that the community can focus on the highest and best submittals,
- Facilitates the final presentation and selection process; and
- Administers the finalized contract including the facilitation of payments and invoicing so that local communities are not overburdened by the process.

These services will save communities staff time – and subsequently financial resources which can then be diverted to other immediate concerns within the community – while also increasing the quantity and quality of submitted RFP proposals.

**3. IS THERE A COST ASSOCIATED WITH ASSISTANCE THROUGH THE CONSULTANT SERVICES PROGRAM?**

Assistance with the Request for Proposals process through the Consultant Services Program has an administrative fee of \$1,000. That fee covers the staff time needed to meet with the community for detailed information necessary to create the RFP, formatting the information into a formal RFP document, advertising the RFP to all Prequalified Consultants, reviewing the initial proposal submittals to refine the submissions to a final two or three proposals, scheduling / facilitating finalist presentations, and facilitating / scheduling a Scope of Services meeting with the selected consultant.

\*Updated: February 5, 2024

**4. ARE THERE ANY MBE, DBE, OR EDGE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CONSULTANT SERVICES PROGRAM?**

Consistent with MORPC’s Diversity and Inclusion Plan, a five percent (5%) Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) goal has been set for the Consultant Services Program. Consultants and consultant teams are strongly encouraged to meet or exceed this goal in their proposals. In some cases, communities may have MBE, Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE), or Encouraging Diversity, Growth & Equity (EDGE) requirements separate from that of MORPC or the Consultant Services Program. In these cases, the community’s requirements will supersede the requirements of the Consultant Services Program.

MORPC will expect the selected consultant / consultant team to meet the MBE percentage included in their contract and will require ongoing reporting of this percentage during the contract life. MORPC will also include MBE prompt payment requirements in all contracts.

*Note: Fulfilling the five percent (5%) goal of MORPC’s Diversity and Inclusion Plan does not negate the need to fulfill any requirements that may exist on behalf of the funder.*

**5. WHAT INFORMATION DOES A COMMUNITY NEED TO PROVIDE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM?**

The information needed for MORPC to accurately and completely form a Request for Proposal document is outlined in the Request for Assistance Instructions document located on the [Consultant Services Program](#) website. In short, the information primarily relates to the sections which may be found in typical RFP requests:

- Project Name
- Project Background
- Project Purpose
- Scope of Services
- Project Deliverables
- Project Milestones and/or Timelines
- Anticipated Budget

A community doesn’t have to know these details in a final and complete form to fill out the [Request for Assistance Form](#). MORPC Staff will follow-up with each request and discuss the pertinent details with the community in order to draft polished versions of the above information.

**6. WHAT TYPES OF PROJECTS ARE ELIGIBLE FOR THE CONSULTANT SERVICES PROGRAM?**

Eligible projects are listed in the table below. Currently, services are generally limited to activities related or akin to comprehensive plans and zoning codes, or the creation or updates of any individual component of each. If you are unsure if a potential project falls within the eligible project types, use the contact form on the Consultant Services website and we will contact you to get more details.

Project Types Table

PROJECT TYPE ID	PROJECT TYPE DESCRIPTION
ZC	New Zoning Codes/Zoning Code Rewrites
ZC-CU	Zoning Code Chapter Updates

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ZC-FB	Form-Based Zoning Codes
CP	New Comprehensive Plans
CP-UP	Comprehensive Plan - Full Update
CP-UA	Comprehensive Plan Chapter Updates/Addendums
CP-UA-D	Demographics
CP-UA-LU	Land Use
CP-UA-T	Transportation
CP-UA-H	Housing
CP-UA-NR	Natural Resources
CP-UA-OS	Open Space / Parks
CP-UP-R	Comprehensive Plan Recommendation Updates
ED	Economic Development Activities
PE	Public Engagement
NAP	Neighborhood / Area Plans
HAP	Housing Action Plans
ATP	Active Transportation Plans
PPA	Parking Plans / Assessments
<p><i>*When referring to project type IDs, all subsequent extensions of a project ID are included in the project ID of the overarching project type. For example, seeking prequalification for Project ID CP-UP would include all subsequent project types (e.g. CP-UP-R).</i></p>	

**7. HOW FREQUENTLY WILL MORPC WORK WITH COMMUNITIES FOR THE RFP PROCESS?**

MORPC will work with communities to form and advertise RFPs on a rolling basis. A community may fill out the [Request for Assistance Form](#) at any time.

*NOTE: If a community is working with a specific timeline in mind, MORPC encourages submitting requests earlier so that there may be adequate time to address any potential comments/suggestions.*

**8. DOES THE CONSULTANT SERVICES PROGRAM PROVIDE FUNDING ASSISTANCE FOR ELIGIBLE PROJECTS?**

The Consultant Services Program does not provide funding assistance for projects. In-kind staffing assistance is provided for the RFP processes of drafting and advertising RFP requests, reviewing proposals, and assisting with the selection of finalist firms. All funding related to the execution of the project is the responsibility of the community.