



MID-OHIO REGIONAL
MORPC
PLANNING COMMISSION

111 Liberty Street, Suite 100
Columbus, Ohio 43215
morpc.org

T. 614. 228.2663
TTY. 1.800.750.0750
info@morpc.org

CONSULTANT SERVICES PROGRAM: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ) FOR CONSULTANTS

MID-OHIO REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

The Consultant Services Program streamlines the Request for Proposals (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 prequalification for consultants. If you cannot locate an answer to a question you may have, please contact the Consultant Services Program (consultantservices@morpc.org).

This document will be updated as new questions are received.

Updated: February 5, 2024

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ) CONSULTANTS

1.	Why did MORPC initiate the Consultant Services Program?.....	3
2.	How does the Consultant Services Program assist consultants?.....	3
3.	Is there a cost associated with prequalification?	3
4.	Who needs to apply for prequalification?	3
5.	Are consultants allowed to form consultant teams when submitting proposals?	4
6.	Are consultant teams required to fulfill any MBE, DBE, or EDGE requirements?.....	4
7.	What's the general process to be prequalified?	4
8.	The documents section doesn't mention outlining a technical approach, but it's listed in the evaluation criteria. Are we required to explicitly address our technical approach?	4
9.	Will we need to resubmit qualifications for the individually posted RFPs?	4
10.	What are the requirements to be prequalified?.....	5
11.	What types of projects are eligible for prequalification through the Consultant Services Program?.....	5
12.	Do we need to complete a separate application for each project type?	6
13.	If applying for prequalification in a main category, do we need to submit project examples for each subset?.....	6
14.	Are we able to submit an Application for Prequalification for just a subset (chapter) under Comprehensive Planning?	6
15.	How frequently does prequalification occur?.....	6
16.	What should a Prequalified Consultant do if there are changes to staff?	6
17.	How Frequently will Requests for Proposals (RFPs) be Advertised through the Program?	7
18.	Is there an annual cost cap associated with this contract?.....	7
19.	Under what circumstances can a prequalified consultant decline to participate in selected projects?	7
20.	Is there a contract agreement established that consultants will be required to use, or will that be established on a project-by-project basis?.....	7

CONSULTANT SERVICES PROGRAM:
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ) FOR CONSULTANTS

**Update: 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 CONSULTANTS?

The Consultant Services Program is designed to assist consultants by breaking down pain points in the Request for Proposals (RFP) process. Consultants seeking to assist communities through the RFP process often face similar obstacles such as a lack of staff time to search individual communities and the many locations through which RFPs may be advertised, a lack of staff time to devote to lengthy and duplicative RFP submission requirements, and obstacles with financing in the event of lengthy invoicing and payment turnaround times.

For the Consultant Services Program to provide a maximum benefit to communities, benefits to consultants must also be realized. To provide a mutually beneficial service for Consultants, the Program is intended to improve upon the RFP process by:

- Advertising the RFPs through a centralized RFP clearinghouse to significantly reduce the amount of time required to search for potential projects;
- Standardizing RFP requests so that pertinent information is simple to locate and respond to;
- Prequalifying consultants so RFP responses can be shorter and less time intensive;
- Providing reliable and firm timelines so Consultants can plan for staffing and financing more accurately and further in advance;
- Administering the finalized contract including the facilitation of payments and invoicing to reduce any potential uncertainties in the payment process.

These services will save communities staff time which can be used to pursue additional RFP and project opportunities.

3. IS THERE A COST ASSOCIATED WITH PREQUALIFICATION?

There is no fee assessed to consultants who wish to be prequalified.

4. WHO NEEDS TO APPLY FOR PREQUALIFICATION?

Only consultants performing over 20% of a project's work hours are required to be prequalified. If you anticipate your firm may perform over 20% of a potential project as either a prime / lead consultant or as a subconsultant, applying for prequalification is encouraged. Consultants who are not prequalified will not be eligible to complete over 20% of a project's work hours.

*Update: February 5, 2024

5. ARE CONSULTANTS ALLOWED TO FORM CONSULTANT TEAMS WHEN SUBMITTING PROPOSALS?

Yes, consultants are encouraged to work together and form consultant teams when submitting proposals. However, not all consultants who may be a part of a Consultant Team need to be prequalified. Only consultants who will perform over 20% of a project's work hours are required to be prequalified.

6. ARE CONSULTANT TEAMS REQUIRED TO FULFILL ANY MBE, DBE, OR EDGE REQUIREMENTS?

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.

7. WHAT'S THE GENERAL PROCESS TO BE PREQUALIFIED?

More information is located within the Application for Prequalification Instructions document located on the [Consultant Services Program](#) website. Applicants must submit PDFs which contain the following information:

- Cover Page
- Letter of Intent (LOI) / Cover Letter
- Consultant Team / Personnel Profiles
- Organizational Chart
- Example Projects (2)
- General Hourly Fee Structures
- Insurance Information

8. THE DOCUMENTS SECTION DOESN'T MENTION OUTLINING A TECHNICAL APPROACH, BUT IT'S LISTED IN THE EVALUATION CRITERIA. ARE WE REQUIRED TO EXPLICITLY ADDRESS OUR TECHNICAL APPROACH?

No. Technical approach will be assessed through a review of materials submitted as example projects.

9. WILL WE NEED TO RESUBMIT QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE INDIVIDUALLY POSTED RFPs?

You will not need to resubmit qualifications for the individual RFPs. The Consultant Services Program prequalification process simplifies the process to eliminate that step. Instead of submitting qualifications for every RFP response, qualification information only needs to be submitted once a year, during the consultant prequalification application period, to receive prequalification.

CONSULTANT SERVICES PROGRAM:
 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ) FOR CONSULTANTS

*Update: February 5, 2024

10. WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS TO BE PREQUALIFIED?

Materials required to be submitted in the [Application for Prequalification Form](#) are included in the Application for Prequalification Instructions, which can be found on the [Consultant Services Program](#) website. Basic components include work history and experience of key personnel and sample projects. The materials for these requirements should communicate a strong understanding of the approaches and principles of the project type for which prequalification is being sought. While familiarity with the Central Ohio market is not a requirement of prequalification, local knowledge of the area will be a component of the scoring rubric for individual projects. The rubric can be found in the Application for Prequalification Instructions.

Prequalification applications will be reviewed and scored based on the evaluation criteria found in Part IV of the Prequalification Application Instructions. All criteria are converted to a score of 1 to 10, and each component's weighting factors are taken into account. Any submitted Application for Prequalification receiving a base score of 7.5 or higher will receive prequalification status in the identified eligible project type.

11. WHAT TYPES OF PROJECTS ARE ELIGIBLE FOR PREQUALIFICATION THROUGH 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
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	<i>Demographics</i>
CP-UA-LU	<i>Land Use</i>
CP-UA-T	<i>Transportation</i>
CP-UA-H	<i>Housing</i>
CP-UA-NR	<i>Natural Resources</i>
CP-UA-OS	<i>Open Space / Parks</i>
CP-UP-R	<i>Comprehensive Plan Recommendation Updates</i>
ED	Economic Development Activities
PE	Public Engagement
NAP	Neighborhood / Area Plans
HAP	Housing Action Plans
ATP	Active Transportation Plans
PPA	Parking Plans / Assessments

*Update: February 5, 2024

**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).*

12. DO WE NEED TO COMPLETE A SEPARATE APPLICATION FOR EACH PROJECT TYPE?

No. In the Application for Prequalification Form, a consultant may select multiple project types for consideration. The submitted example projects should reflect the technical proficiency the consultant has in each project type, with a maximum of two (2) example projects for each project type selected.

13. IF APPLYING FOR PREQUALIFICATION IN A MAIN CATEGORY, DO WE NEED TO SUBMIT PROJECT EXAMPLES FOR EACH SUBSET?

No, you do not need to submit examples for each subset contained within an umbrella category. For example, sample projects for a full Comprehensive Plan (new or update) will be considered as inclusive of all subsets.

14. ARE WE ABLE TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION FOR PREQUALIFICATION FOR JUST A SUBSET (CHAPTER) UNDER COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING?

Yes. We anticipate consultants may form teams based on expertise. Applicants are not required to demonstrate substantial expertise in all areas of comprehensive planning.

15. HOW FREQUENTLY DOES PREQUALIFICATION OCCUR?

Consultants will be eligible to be prequalified at the beginning of each calendar year. Notifications of the prequalification window opening will be distributed through MORPC's communication channels on the Friday of the next to last week of the calendar year, with the prequalification window opening on the second Monday of January. The prequalification window itself will be open for five (5) weeks. For more details on specific dates and timelines for the Consultant Services Program, see the Consultant Services Program Calendar under the Program Details section of the Program's webpage.

NOTE: These dates may be subject to change. Check the [Consultant Services Program](#) website for announcements of any deviations from the timeline above.

Once a consultant is prequalified, they do not need to submit a full Application for Prequalification again. During the annual prequalification window, consultants who are already prequalified only need to submit an updated Personnel Profile and Organizational Chart to reflect any potential staff changes which may have occurred.

16. WHAT SHOULD A PREQUALIFIED CONSULTANT DO IF THERE ARE CHANGES TO STAFF?

If there are changes to the staff listed in the Application for Prequalification, a Prequalified Consultant should notify MORPC Staff and submit an updated Personnel Profile and Organizational Chart through the [Application for Prequalification Form](#).

*CONSULTANT SERVICES PROGRAM:
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ) FOR CONSULTANTS*

**Update: February 5, 2024*

- 17. HOW FREQUENTLY WILL REQUESTS FOR PROPOSALS (RFPs) BE ADVERTISED THROUGH THE PROGRAM?**
MORPC works with communities on a rolling basis to form and advertise RFPs. Notifications will be sent to all Prequalified Consultants once MORPC adds the finalized RFPs to the Program's webpage.
- 18. IS THERE AN ANNUAL COST CAP ASSOCIATED WITH THIS CONTRACT?**
No, consultants may submit proposals for any project type for which they have been prequalified. There is no maximum or minimum amount that may be awarded to consultants through the Consultant Services Program.
- 19. UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES CAN A PREQUALIFIED CONSULTANT DECLINE TO PARTICIPATE IN SELECTED PROJECTS?**
A prequalified consultant always has the option to submit a proposal for – or pass on – any project advertised through the Consultant Services Program. A consultant may also choose to withdraw a submitted proposal at any point in time through the evaluation process. However, once a contract is finalized with a community, the consultant will be held to the provisions of the contract for termination of services.
- 20. IS THERE A CONTRACT AGREEMENT ESTABLISHED THAT CONSULTANTS WILL BE REQUIRED TO USE, OR WILL THAT BE ESTABLISHED ON A PROJECT-BY-PROJECT BASIS?**
All contract agreements will be established between the consultant and the community, and may vary from project-to-project and community-to-community.
- 