



MID-OHIO REGIONAL
MORPC
PLANNING COMMISSION

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

FEDERAL FUNDING & STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITIES CONSULTING, 2025

The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) is requesting proposals from firms to provide professional federal funding and strategic consulting opportunities consulting services through 2025.

MORPC is a voluntary association of local government communities in the 15-county Central Ohio area. Our organization strives to enhance the quality of life and competitive advantages of Central Ohio by working through local governments and other constituents. A catalyst for change, evidence of MORPC's work is seen every day through planning, programming and services in the areas of housing, transportation, water, land use, economic development, environment, public policy and technology. We assist our local government members by providing innovative solutions for the many challenges facing our growing region.

Consultants interested in being considered must submit **via email in a PDF format**. Proposals will be received by MORPC until **5:00 pm (ET), Wednesday, April 30, 2025**.

Submit proposals to:

Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission
Attn: Kyle Probert
111 Liberty Street, Suite 100
Columbus, OH 43215
kprobert@morpc.org

Proposals must be received prior to the proposal due date and time. Facsimile submissions will not be accepted.

All questions must be submitted in writing and should be submitted via email to Kyle Probert at kprobert@morpc.org. No answers will be given over the phone. Written answers, including any amendments to the RFP if necessary will be posted on MORPC's website. Responses to questions will be posted at <http://www.morpc.org/rfps-rfqs/>.

The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the related nondiscrimination statutes, hereby notifies all bidders that it will affirmatively ensure that any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, all bidders including disadvantaged business enterprises will be afforded full and fair opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, low-income status, or limited English proficiency in consideration for an award.

Neither MORPC nor any member agency of the Committee shall be liable for any costs incurred by the consultant in response to this RFP, or any costs incurred in connection with any discussions, correspondence or attendance at interviews or negotiation sessions.

All materials submitted in response to this RFP shall become the property of MORPC and may be returned only at MORPC's option.

All materials received shall be considered public information and shall be open to public inspection.

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I. OVERVIEW

The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) is seeking a firm or firms to provide federal funding guidance, strategy, and education for the Central Ohio region. The successful applicant will be granted a contract lasting through December 31, 2025 or later, with potential options to renew.

MORPC, on behalf of its more than 90 local government members, seeks to drive investment to Central Ohio to aid public investment as the region continues to grow. In a continually evolving federal landscape, expert opinion and analysis is an invaluable asset to our agency. Ensuring continued strategic engagement with federal partners will be critical as we seek to enhance our region's assets in mobility, sustainability, housing, economic development, recreation, and more.

II. SCOPE OF SERVICES

- Conduct up to two strategic advisory calls per month with the MORPC executive team to align on regional priorities and opportunities.
- Provide ongoing strategic counsel on regional infrastructure initiatives, with a focus on sharing key federal funding opportunities.
- Support the planning of key events involving public and private transportation, infrastructure, and development leaders
- Offer additional consulting support as needed, with flexible availability to address emerging priorities or time-sensitive initiatives.

III. PROPOSAL FORMAT

The proposal must address the following items in the following order. Failure of the proposal to respond to a specific requirement may be a basis for elimination from consideration during the comparative evaluation. MORPC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals.

Each consultant shall submit a formal proposal not to exceed twenty-five (25) 8.5" x 11" pages (excluding tabs, dividers, etc.) and shall contain the following sections:

- A) Cover Letter
- B) Consultant's Personnel Profile and Corporate Qualifications
- C) Budget or Cost Proposal

A.) COVER LETTER

The **cover letter** shall be signed by a representative authorized to legally bind the firm, and include:

- Name, telephone number, and e-mail address of a contact person with authority to answer questions regarding the proposal (ideally the day-to-day consultant for this work).

- Name, address, and phone number of a contact person to be notified regarding contractual issues.
- Identification of the firm as a corporation or other legal entity.

The letter shall state that the proposer:

- Has sole and complete responsibility for delivery of the required services.
- Is presently not debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible or involuntarily excluded from covered transactions by any federal or state department or agency.

B.) CONSULTANT'S PERSONNEL & CORPORATE PROFILE

Specific background information on key individuals who are anticipated to be assigned to this work should be included, most notably the lead consultant. Identify the location of the office where the majority of the work is to be performed. This section shall also provide an overview of each key personnel and show their relationship to the firm and their affiliations. Identify any diversity and inclusion efforts the consultant is taking or will take.

C.) BUDGET OR COST PROPOSAL

This section shall also provide a full description and breakdown of the expected cost. The proposal shall present a breakdown of hours and expenses by task and state fiscal year, the hourly billing rates for team members, and all non-labor expenses expected to be reimbursed this includes all direct labor costs by person or position, overhead costs, non-salary direct costs including any travel time, equipment costs, per diem, printing costs, any fees, subcontractor costs, conversion of data and delivery to MORPC incurred by the vendor/consultant. Total cost shall be indicated, as well as an estimated cost per task based on the tasks identified in the work plan.

If the price proposal is not received when due or if the proposal does not include requested information, that proposal may be dropped from further consideration.

The proposer should be aware that it is the goal of MORPC to process and pay properly prepared and submitted invoices within 30-60 days, although that is not guaranteed. Improperly prepared and submitted invoices will be returned and will consequently not be processed and paid within the 30-60-day goal. Proof of payment will be required for all charges included on invoices.

IV. PROCUREMENT PROCESS

RFP TIMELINE

The schedule for the RFP is given below. Dates are tentative and may be modified by MORPC as necessary.

Key Date	Event
April 16, 2025	Proposal is posted on MORPC website for interested parties to retrieve.
April 30, 2025	Completed proposals due to MORPC by 5:00 p.m.
May 1, 2025	Proposals will be opened at 2:00 p.m.
May 1-2, 2025	Evaluations of proposals.
Week of May 5th	Oral presentations at MORPC, if required.

May 9, 2025	Evaluation Committee makes recommendation.
May 16, 2025	Contact all bidders regarding awards to be made
June 5 th (Executive Committee) June 12 th (Commission <i>if-needed</i>)	MORPC Board meeting to approve resolution/award contract
Week of May 19 th	Contract preparation.
May 26, 2025	Contract finalized.
June 1, 2025	Services begin.

The selection of the consultant will follow a multi-step process. The first step will be an evaluation of the written proposals using the criteria listed below.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

The evaluation criteria are as follows:

- 1. General Quality & Adequacy of Response (30%)**
 - a. Completeness and thoroughness
 - b. Responsiveness to terms and conditions
 - c. Overall impression
- 2. Organization, Personnel, Experience & Project Management (40%)**
 - a. Qualifications and experience of proposed personnel
 - b. Relevant knowledge, skills & experience
 - c. Experience working with similar clients
 - d. Demonstrated capacity to do the work
 - e. Regional Understanding/Local Presence:
 - i. Familiarity with Central Ohio's characteristics
 - ii. Familiarity with Central Ohio's economy, culture, and environment
- 3. Cost/Budget (30%)**
 - a. Clarity of budget and congruence with RFP and proposed scope of work
 - b. Cost

EVALUATION COMMITTEE

The Committee will conduct the evaluation of proposals and reserves the right to reject any and all proposals in whole or in part received in response to this request. The Committee may waive minor defects which are not material when no prejudice will result to the rights of any other consultants or to the public.

The second step would include oral presentations. Depending upon the relative merits of the proposals, two or three of the consultants will be invited to give an oral presentation and respond to questions from an interview panel. The second step may be waived if the Committee finds from the evaluation in the first step that one team is clearly more qualified to perform the services than the other teams.

ORAL PRESENTATIONS

At MORPC's option, the consultant may be required to make a live summarization of its proposal in Columbus. If presentations are necessary, MORPC will contact the consultant's authorized representative to schedule the time, date, and location of the presentation. The presentation will be

within two weeks of notification. Total time of the presentation shall be limited to 50 minutes, with 15 minutes reserved for questions and answers. The proposed consultant shall attend and deliver the presentation. A few other key personnel may be present to assist in the presentation and discussion. Key personnel shall have been specifically listed in the consultant's proposal as part of the consulting team.

The purpose of the presentation is to provide clarification of information presented in the written proposal. The presentation will be given to the Committee. The presentation will focus on the consultant's understanding and approach. All information detailed in the presentation shall have been originally incorporated in the submitted written proposal. The consultant must explain how the expertise of the proposed team will be applied to satisfy the RFP requirements and accomplish the feasibility study.

If presentations are requested, the consultant must comply at no cost or obligation to MORPC. A consultant's refusal to make a presentation as described shall result in the consultant's proposal being rejected.

CLARIFICATION INTERVIEWS

At MORPC's option, the consultant may be required to answer questions about the proposal. The purpose of the interview is to provide clarification of information presented in the written proposal. If interviews are necessary, MORPC will contact the consultant's authorized representative to schedule the time, date, and method of interview (e.g. in-person presentation or conference call). The interview will be within two weeks of notification. The interview will be given by the Committee. If in-person interviews are requested, the consultant must comply at no cost or obligation to MORPC. A consultant's refusal to make a presentation as described shall result in the consultant's proposal being rejected from consideration for the project.

SELECTION AND NEGOTIATIONS

Based on the evaluation of the proposals, the most qualified consultant will be selected. If negotiation with the highest ranked consultant fails to result in a mutually acceptable agreement, MORPC will notify that firm in writing of the termination of negotiations. The next highest ranked consultant, as determined by the earlier technical proposal evaluation, will then be invited to enter into negotiations with MORPC. If negotiations again fail, the same procedure shall be followed, with each next most qualified firm until a contract has been negotiated. If the remaining proposals are considered not to be qualified, the notification and selection processes will be repeated.

V. PROPOSAL TERMS & CONDITIONS

Evaluation of Proposal Compliance with Specifications

Understanding that no consultant may completely meet all requirements of the specifications, MORPC reserves the sole right to determine whether a proposal substantially complies with the specifications; accept, negotiate modifications to, or reject the terms of any proposal; and waive the right to accept a part, or parts, of a proposal, unless otherwise restricted in the proposal.

Modification and/or Withdrawal of Proposals

Modifications of a submitted proposal must be received by the designated due date specified. Withdrawal of proposals will be allowed only in those cases in which a written request to withdraw a Proposal is received by MORPC prior to the date and hour for receiving and opening Proposals.

Proposer Qualifications

MORPC may require all proposers to submit evidence of qualifications, and may consider any evidence of the financial, technical, and other qualifications and abilities. MORPC will not award a contract to a proposer who, in its opinion, is not fully qualified on the basis of financial resources and responsibility, possession of adequate equipment, personnel, experience, and past record of performance to perform the obligation to be undertaken competently and without delay.

Award of Contract

Each consultant acknowledges that MORPC will use its discretion and judgment in making the final decision and further acknowledges that no claim by the consultant will arise in any way relating to the exercise of that judgment by MORPC. MORPC reserves the right to accept the Proposal deemed to be in the best interest of MORPC or to reject any and all Proposals.

MORPC's Executive Director is the only individual who may legally commit MORPC to the expenditure of public funds. No cost chargeable to the proposed contract may be incurred before receipt of either a fully executed contract or a specific, written authorization to proceed.

GENERAL INFORMATION & REQUIREMENTS

Ownership of Products

MORPC will retain the copyright for all data, materials, information, processes, studies, reports, surveys, proposals, plans, codes, scientific information, technological information, regulations, maps, equipment, charts, schedules, photographs, exhibits, software, software source code, documentation, and other materials and property that are prepared, developed or created under or in connection with this contract. Therefore, the submitter should anticipate that all products of this work effort will become the property of MORPC who will make them available to other government agencies and their contractors.

Deviation Clause

The consultant's attention is called to the condition that, if awarded a contract, the consultants will be required to furnish the particular item referred to in strict accordance with the specifications or descriptions as proposed, unless a departure or substitution is clearly noted and described in the proposal, along with the reasons therefore.

Tax Exemption

MORPC is exempt from the payment of federal excise and transportation taxes levied under the provisions of the Internal Revenue Code. MORPC is also exempt from Ohio State Gross Retail (sales tax). The successful consultants will be furnished with any certificates of exemption required.

TITLE VI

Equal Opportunity

The consultant agrees that it will not discriminate against any employee, applicant for employment, or sub-contractor and that it will take affirmative action to insure that employees, applicants and sub-contractors are treated equally during employment without regard to race, color, creed, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender or sex (including pregnancy, gender identification or expression, and sexual orientation), gender identity or expression, age (including federally protected 40 years or older), disability or other handicap, genetic information, marital/familial

status, military status (past, present or future), limited English proficiency, medical conditions, or income or status with regard to public assistance.

Disadvantaged Vendors

Disadvantaged Vendors shall have the maximum opportunity to participate in the performance of contracts financed under this solicitation. In this regard, all proposers shall take all necessary and reasonable steps to ensure that minority vendors have the maximum opportunity to compete for and perform any subcontracts. Also, proposing firms are encouraged to notify MORPC if they meet one of the disadvantaged vendor designations, such as Minority Business Enterprise (MBE), Small Business Enterprise (SBE), or Women-owned Business Enterprise (WBE).

CONTRACTING REQUIREMENTS

The following are not part of the proposal requirements but will be requirements in the contract in addition to other contractual requirements. *Please also note that prior to negotiation, the firm selected for negotiation must provide average hourly rates for personnel assigned.*

Cancellation

MORPC reserves the right to cancel any contract for failure or refusal of performance, fraud, deceit, misrepresentation, collusion, or any other misconduct on the part of the consultant.

Unresolved Finding for Recovery

The selected consultant affirmatively represents and warrants to MORPC that it is not subject to a finding for recovery under ORC 9.24 or that it has taken appropriate remedial steps required under ORC 9.24 or otherwise qualifies under that section. The consultant agrees that if this representation or warranty is deemed to be false, the agreement shall be void *ab initio* as between the parties to this agreement, and any funds paid by MORPC to the consultant hereunder shall be repaid to MORPC immediately, or an action for recovery may be commenced immediately by MORPC for recovery of said funds.

Covenants of Consultant

The consultant will be required to covenant and warrant the following:

- a) Consultant is not debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in any contract, supported in whole or in part by the funding sources for this contract;
- b) Consultant has not within a three (3) year period had one or more public transactions terminated for cause or default;
- c) Consultant will comply with the provisions of Section 1352, Title 31 of the U.S. Code, which prohibits the use of federal funds to lobby any official or employee of any federal agency, or member or employee of Congress; and to disclose any lobbying activities in connection with federal funds.