



MID-OHIO REGIONAL
MORPC
PLANNING COMMISSION

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REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

CLEANER WATER IN THE UPPER SCIOTO WATERSHED September 2, 2022

The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) requests interested and qualified companies to submit a Statement of Qualifications to develop a communications strategy.

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.

MORPC and the American Farmland Trust (AFT) have worked collaboratively to support common goals and promote best practices for pollution prevention from agricultural sources. AFT was awarded funding to support Farming for Clean Water in the Upper Scioto Watershed and MORPC will receive funding through the end of April 5, 2024, to provide communications planning services.

This Request for Qualifications (RFQ) outlines the information necessary to understand the requirements for becoming a Consultant. This Request for Qualifications is available online 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.

Small, minority-owned, or woman-owned businesses are strongly encouraged to apply.

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I. BACKGROUND

The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC), along with several partners, completed the Sustaining Scioto study in 2015 to identify risks to the region's water resources due to climate change. This proactive, science-based study aimed to ensure that Central Ohio has clean and secure water resources for residents and businesses now and into the future. The study assessed the impacts of changing weather patterns and regional development on surface waters within the Upper Scioto watershed, that supply drinking water for nearly two million Central Ohio residents. These results, along with the guidance of a stakeholder advisory group, were used to identify adaptive strategies to manage water quality and quantity during extreme drought or flood.

In 2019, MORPC convened Central Ohio stakeholders to develop the Sustaining Scioto Implementation Plan, which identifies a range of projects and initiatives that will advance the adaptive strategies identified in Sustaining Scioto. MORPC formed the Sustaining Scioto Board in December 2019, comprised of regional partners and stakeholders across the region, to help inform MORPC's work and to promote collaboration across the rural, suburban, and urban communities.

MORPC and the American Farmland Trust (AFT) have worked collaboratively to support common goals and promote best practices for pollution prevention from agricultural sources, including land erosion and nutrient runoff, which degrade water quality for downstream users. AFT was awarded funding to support Farming for Clean Water in the Upper Scioto Watershed and MORPC will receive funding through the end of April 5, 2024, to provide communications planning services. The goals of the services outlined below are to:

- Collaborate to create a plan that increases awareness of climate change impacts on water quality and support for farmer adoption of water quality practices and public and private sector investments.
- Increase awareness level of climate change impacts on water quality in the Upper Scioto River Watershed and the key economic and environmental role of ecosystem services in ameliorating these impacts to 50% of key stakeholders such as farmers, landowners, and rural community leaders.
- Establish at least 175 rural community contacts through messaging and outreach services.
- Quantitatively track progress towards goals and share progress through the Sustaining Scioto Board.

MORPC is seeking consulting services to assist with the following tasks and activities related to messaging, outreach, and public engagement between November 2022 and July 2023

II. SCOPE OF SERVICES AND CONTRACTOR REQUIREMENTS

Clarify Purpose and Conduct Stakeholder Analysis and Mapping

The Consultant will work with MORPC and the Sustaining Scioto Board to clarify the purpose of the communication plan, as well as conduct a stakeholder analysis and mapping process to identify key audiences. This step will provide the focus for outreach and education activities by identifying specific audiences and stakeholders who have the most influence on the project and are most affected by it as well as how to prioritize and engage with them based on different levels of interest and influence. This process also identifies potential touchpoints and communication channels to

reach specific groups in the Upper Scioto Watershed area, which builds the foundation for a comprehensive plan for outreach and communication. The deliverables will include an agreed upon purpose, and a list of key audiences, stakeholder groups and contacts.

Message Development

The Consultant will work with MORPC's Sr. Planner and Communications and Engagement Team to develop key messages and themes that relate are easily digested by the identified audiences and stakeholders. This process will help inform the creation of content that can be strategically disseminated in a myriad of formats. Deliverables including talking points, PowerPoint presentation templates, fact sheet.

Online Public Engagement Platform/Strategy

Work closely with MORPC to develop an online public engagement strategy to help increase an online presence. We are seeking creative strategies for increasing visibility and engaging the identified stakeholders across the project area. Deliverables include a communications strategy tailored to online platforms, and identification of digital engagement opportunities for the targeted audience and the public to increase awareness (i.e., marketing, surveys, video content, discussion boards, webinars).

Tracking Progress

Identify best method for defining and tracking progress, such as reach of branded messaging and its level of educational influence. Deliverables include identification of metrics for tracking progress, and recommended framework or tool for tracking into the future.

III. CONTENTS OF THE STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS

The Statement of Qualifications must address the following items. Failure to respond to a specific requirement may be a basis for elimination. MORPC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all submissions.

A.) COVER LETTER

- List the name of the solicitation
- List the name, address and other contact information of the company (may be part of letterhead)
- List the name, title, telephone number, and e-mail address of a contact person with authority to answer questions regarding the Statement of Qualifications
- Include an identification of the company as a corporation or other legal entity
- Include a statement that the contractor has sole and complete responsibility for delivery of the required services
- Be signed by a representative authorized to legally bind the company

B.) PERSONAL AND CORPORATE PROFILE

- Overview of the company
- If applicable, statement of Minority Business Enterprise (MBE), Small Business Enterprise (SBE), Encouraging Diversity Growth and Equity (EDGE), and Women-Owned Business Enterprise (WBE) certifications

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- Background information on individuals who are anticipated to be assigned to the work and must include a project manager
- Company criminal history check policy
- Describe systems and processes for the maintenance of records and accounts, including personnel and financial records, and controls to protect personal confidential information

C.) RELATED EXPERIENCE

List previous related experience with two examples of completed communications plans, including customer name, address, phone number, and a description of the work.

D.) TRAINING AND CERTIFICATIONS

- Provide resumes or other materials which demonstrate the individuals are qualified to perform the work.

E.) INSURANCE

- Copy of current Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation Certificate of Premium Payment
- Copy of Certificate of Liability Insurance meeting the limits of liability outlined in Section II, or a statement that the company will obtain insurance meeting the limits of liability outlined in Section II
- Statement that the company will furnish to MORPC a copy of the Certificate of Liability Insurance naming MORPC as additional insured

F.) BUDGET OR COST PROPOSAL

The proposed budget for this work shall not exceed \$33,750 and should be completed by July 2023. The proposer should be aware that it is the goal of MORPC to process and pay properly prepared and submitted invoices within 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 60-day goal. Proof of payment will be required for all charges included on invoices.

IV. SELECTION PROCESS

Contractor qualifications will be reviewed and assessed by a committee to determine if the submitter meets or is capable of meeting the contracting requirements. If there are areas of deficiency (for example, not all required trainings have been completed) consideration will be given if the submitter demonstrates how they will meet the requirement.

V. SCHEDULE

This solicitation begins on the date in the title of this Request for Qualifications and shall remain open until October 15th.

Interested parties may submit a Statement of Qualifications at any time while this solicitation is active.

VI. SUBMISSIONS

Submit Statement of Qualifications to:

Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission
Attn: Edwina Teye
111 Liberty Street, Suite 100
Columbus, OH 43215
Eteye@morpc.org

Electronic submissions are preferred. Include Request for Qualification – Farming for Cleaner Water in the Upper Scioto Watershed in the subject line.

VII. TERMS & CONDITIONS

The submitter 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, sex, gender identification, creed, religion, ancestry, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, genetic information, age, marital/familial status, military status (past, present, or future), limited English proficiency, or status with regard to public assistance.

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).

MORPC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all Statements of Qualifications.

MORPC shall not be liable for any costs incurred by the submitter in response to this RFQ, 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.

The following are not part of the proposal requirements but will be requirements in the contract in addition to other contractual requirements.

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 project;
- 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.