



## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

### **Central Ohio Greenways Wayfinding Strategy**

The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) is requesting proposals from experienced individuals, organizations, or teams to act as the consultant(s) for development of the Central Ohio Greenways Wayfinding Strategy. The project timeline is estimated at 10 months.

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 a **PDF format copy of their proposal via email to [mvonstein@morpc.org](mailto:mvonstein@morpc.org)** with subject line **Central Ohio Greenways Wayfinding Strategy**. Respondents should expect an email reply upon submission. Proposals will be received by MORPC until **5:00 pm (ET), December 2, 2022**.

#### **Submit PDF proposals to:**

Melinda Vonstein, Central Ohio Greenways Program Manager  
[mvonstein@morpc.org](mailto:mvonstein@morpc.org)

All questions must be submitted in writing and should be submitted via email to Melinda Vonstein at [mvonstein@morpc.org](mailto:mvonstein@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 <https://www.morpc.org/rfps-rfqs>

The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) 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. BACKGROUND

Central Ohio Greenways (COG) is a trail network of national significance spanning 230+ miles, connecting Central Ohio to other parts of the state and country. These trails are traveled more than 12 million miles annually and provide economic, quality of life, and health benefits to the community. The Central Ohio Greenways Board, a committee of MORPC, was formed in 2015. The Board developed a 5-year strategic plan that included the development of a vision and mission statement. The COG Board's vision is to create a world-class network of trails easily accessible to every Central Ohioan. Its mission is to increase Greenways trail mileage and use of trails for recreational and transportation needs.

The Board seeks to increase the number of people using the regional trail system through trail network expansions, increased programming, improved branding and marketing, and new partnerships. With Central Ohio expected to be a region of three million people by 2050 – bringing an increased demand for more walkable neighborhoods and transportation options – trails have become a critical element for providing a high quality of life to a diverse population. New trail miles will extend existing trails, fill gaps in trail corridors, connect neighborhoods to job centers, and create a truly interconnected network of trails useful for both transportation and recreation.

As the COG trail network continues to expand, the Board and its partners have identified the need for a unified signage and wayfinding strategy that will support trail usage for active transportation, recreation, and tourism and ultimately support economic development and quality of life improvements in the region.

MORPC will assist communities and regions throughout Ohio to plan for and implement a cohesive wayfinding strategy that both unifies regional/statewide trail networks and celebrates the uniqueness of diverse communities and trail systems. The wayfinding strategy will include guidance for selecting directional content, such as destinations and landmarks, as well as appropriate placement of wayfinding tools, such as signs, maps, and digital applications. The project will result in a guide that accepts and encourages use of regional and local brands while providing recommendations to cohesively communicate a shared wayfinding goal.

Important Note: The scope of work is expected to provide the data and wayfinding planning needed to implement new wayfinding and augment existing wayfinding. This requested scope of work **does not** include the development of a signage design or brand to ensure the results of this work may be useful at many geographic scales and integrated into existing or planned signage brands. The strategy created through this project should provide a blueprint that will support the successful development of signage design, digital wayfinding applications, or other communication tools in the future. Project deliverables may be used in coordination with existing local or state signage standards.

## II. PURPOSE

Wayfinding typically communicates two things: Where someone is along a predefined route and where destinations near a route are located. For example, wayfinding along the Ohio to Erie Trail should communicate where in terms of mile markers a person is on the Trail, as well as where important off-trail destinations, such as food and cultural amenities, are located.

Wayfinding and signage has consistently been a top requested amenity in bike/pedestrian and trail user surveys. In a 2019 ODNR survey of trail users, participants ranked maps and signage as the single most important trail amenity among 17 options.

([https://ohiodnr.gov/static/documents/parks/trails/Ohio\\_Trails\\_Vision-2019-SM.pdf](https://ohiodnr.gov/static/documents/parks/trails/Ohio_Trails_Vision-2019-SM.pdf)). The

Greenways Wayfinding Strategy should respond to this well-documented public sentiment with a standardized approach that can be replicated by regional trail networks across the State.

MORPC will leverage the capacity of its COG Board to advance the Greenways Wayfinding Strategy, because we believe regional collaboration is essential for developing trail routes, and it is equally crucial for wayfinding and signage. However, in Central Ohio and most regions across the state, wayfinding is typically planned and implemented by local trail managers. When sign design, and more specifically directional content, changes as a trail moves from one jurisdiction to another, the result is a disconnected look and feel which can cause confusion for trail users and, ultimately, the potential for unintended and even dangerous consequences. A well-designed trail doesn't stop at a jurisdictional boundary; nor should important information on which its users depend.

### **III. SCOPE OF SERVICES**

This project will produce a strategy for inventorying destinations and communicating wayfinding at a regional scale. This will be accomplished in two parts. Part 1 will focus on a standardized approach to data and asset collection. Part 2 will focus on the development of a standardized wayfinding communications strategy.

The geographic scope of this project is the 7-county Central Ohio Greenways [network](#) with specific focus on the Ohio to Erie Trail in Madison County, Franklin County, Delaware County, and Knox County. We've selected this segment of trail for beta testing because of its importance as the most prominent national (Great American), state (Ohio to Erie), and regional (Camp Chase, Alum Creek, and Heart of Ohio) trail through Central Ohio. Collecting assets along this segment of trail will allow the project team to develop a standardized, replicable strategy for collecting data and inventorying assets across multiple jurisdictions, as well as communicating national, regional, and local designations across multiple trail names. This same segment of trail was also the focus of MORPC's Trail Town Framework effort, completed in 2022, which provides a blueprint for implementing a regional and potentially statewide trail tourism program.

#### **Part 1: Data & Asset Collection Toolkit**

Part 1 will develop a replicable process for collecting data and inventorying assets along trails. The process will assist communities and/or regions to determine relevant trail location information and to identify regionally and locally significant destinations.

The data collection process created for this project will be replicable and easy to manage and maintain by any trail manager, community, or partner in Ohio. Such end-users can expect clear recommendations for appropriate collection along "trailsheds," and a toolkit for determining the types of assets to be inventoried, which will likely include an ESRI geospatial collection tool. Other recommendations or tools identified by the project team may also be included.

In addition, trail use data will be collected using Eco Counter equipment. This data will be used to approximate how frequently destinations are utilized by those traveling by trail and how proximity affects utilization.

Part 1 will produce three deliverables: (1) an asset inventory toolkit and written guide; (2) a list of assets on and along the Ohio to Erie Trail from Madison County to Knox County; and (3) an analysis of trail use based on proximity to nearby off-trail assets.

#### **Part 2: Develop a Wayfinding Content and Placement Communications Strategy**

Using the data collected in Part 1, the project team will categorize types of assets and evaluate the need for these assets to be communicated in wayfinding tools (signs, maps,

digital applications, etc.). This evaluation will include engagement with local trail partners and user groups.

Content and placement guidance is critical when implementing wayfinding and signage on a network that crosses jurisdictional boundaries. The guidance will support a seamless communication standard for trail users as they travel across regions. This uniformity will make the trail system more useful for transportation and recreation.

Part 2 will produce the following deliverables: (1) detailed written guidance for prioritizing assets and destinations for wayfinding communication; and (2) placement considerations for wayfinding signage, maps, applications, etc. Using the Ohio to Erie Trail segment, the written report will include a detailed example/case study of the deliverable's application.

#### **IV. OTHER SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

MORPC will be purchasing and installing trail counters along the Ohio to Erie Trail to collect trail use data that should be used by the selected consultant to support the recommendations.

#### **V. 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 (20) 8.5" x 11" pages and shall contain the following sections:

- A) Cover Letter
- B) Organization, Personnel, Experience & Project Management
  - a. Consultant's Personnel Profile and Corporate Qualifications
  - b. Project Team Availability and Capacity
- C) Consultant's Methodology/Work Plan
- D) List and Description of Deliverables
- E) Project Schedule
- F) Budget or Cost Proposal
- G) MORPC Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Goal Compliance/Subcontracting

**A.) COVER LETTER**

The **cover letter** shall be signed by a representative authorized to legally make an agreement with MORPC, 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 project manager for this work).
- Name, address, and phone number of a contact person to be notified regarding contractual issues.
- Identification of the individual or firm as a legal entity.
- Will meet the MORPC DBE goal or justification why DBE goal can't be met.

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 department or agency or the Ohio Department of Transportation.

**B.) ORGANIZATION, PERSONNEL, EXPERIENCE & PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

**CONSULTANT'S PERSONNEL & PROFILE**

Specific background information on key individuals who are anticipated to be assigned to the project should be included, most notably the project manager. The background information on these individuals would emphasize their experience relative to project requirements. A statement concerning the recent related experience of persons from your team who will be actively engaged in the proposed effort should also be included.

Identify similar projects undertaken by you and/or your firm or proposed teams a) within Ohio and b) in other states. Provide appropriate reference(s), name(s) and telephone number(s).

**PROJECT TEAM, AVAILABILITY & CAPACITY**

Identify the location of the office where the majority of the work is to be performed. Discuss your own and, if applicable, your team's availability and capacity necessary to accomplish the work contemplated in the work elements as outlined in your technical approach.

If more than one team member is working on the project, please provide an overview of each key personnel and show their relationship to the firm and their affiliations. If subcontracts are utilized, the position in the project team and identity of the subcontractor shall be stated.

**C.) CONSULTANT'S METHODOLOGY/WORK PLAN**

This section shall indicate the consultant's understanding of the project scope of work, a definition of the scope of the project (including a discussion of the tasks to be performed to accomplish the scope of work), a definition of the final product, and the consultant's approach to the project.

The consultant's proposal shall contain a description of the proposed methodology and how the methodology addresses MORPC's scope of work. In addition, please explain any aspect of your method that is unique or innovative.

Also, administrative information, such as the consultant’s status reporting procedures and the consultant’s approach to effective communication with MORPC personnel and sub-consultants, shall be included.

Please indicate where MORPC and its partners can be of assistance and/or lead certain parts of the project and where the consultant will fully lead.

**D.) LIST AND DESCRIPTION OF DELIVERABLES**

The consultant’s proposal shall list and describe the deliverables for the project as described in each part of the scope of work. All materials created and submitted throughout the lifetime of the projects related to the contract shall become the property of MORPC. All materials received shall be considered public information and shall be open to public inspection.

**E.) PROJECT SCHEDULE**

Included as part of the proposal, the proposer shall provide a schedule to ensure that the project can be completed by September 4, 2023. If the consultant believes this will adversely affect the quality of the project, the consultant should explain why.

**F.) BUDGET PROPOSAL**

The proposal shall include a cost proposal for the project. The expected budget for this project is approximately \$200,000. If the cost 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 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-day goal. Proof of payment will be required for all charges included on invoices.

Note, the project is funded with U.S. DOT funds and will be subject to all the requirements thereby imposed. In addition, as U.S. DOT funds are administered by the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT), this project will be subject to all requirements imposed by ODOT.

**VI. PROCUREMENT PROCESS**

**RFP TIMELINE**

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

<b>Key Date</b>	<b>Event</b>
November 7, 2022	Proposal is posted on MORPC website for interested parties to retrieve.
December 2, 2022	Completed proposals due to MORPC by 5:00 p.m. EST
December 2, 2022 – December 16, 2022	Evaluations of proposals. Finalists may be asked to participate in a virtual interview.
December 16, 2022	Evaluation Committee makes recommendation.
December 19, 2022	Contact all proposers.



January 31, 2023	Sign contract.
February 1, 2023	Begin project.
September 4, 2023	Project completion.

### ***EVALUATION CRITERIA***

The selection of the project consultant will be evaluated on the following criteria:

**1. General Quality & Adequacy of Response (5%)**

- a. Completeness and thoroughness
- b. Responsiveness to terms and conditions
- c. Overall impression

**2. Personnel, Experience & Project Management (45%)**

- a. Qualifications and experience of proposed personnel, including project manager
- b. Relevant knowledge, skills & experience with the project
- c. Demonstrated capacity to do the work
- d. Study area understanding

**3. Technical Approach & Work Plan (50%)**

- a. Clarity and organization in concept development
- b. Approach to scope of work, including the ability to derive creative solutions
- c. Addresses expected outcomes
- d. Specialized experience relevant to the work scope

### ***PROJECT COMMITTEE***

A steering committee will evaluate proposals and conduct interviews, as needed. The committee 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.

### ***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 virtual format. The interview will be given by the Committee. 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.

## **VII. ADMINISTRATIVE & ORGANIZATIONAL ELEMENTS**

### ***PROJECT ORGANIZATION***

The consultant will work with the Project Manager of MORPC to coordinate routine exchange of data and overall project supervision.

#### Role of MORPC

MORPC will manage the entire project. MORPC conducts the RFP process and will, together with the Committee and through appropriate approvals, select the consultant to perform the project as described in this scope. MORPC will also work with and provide assistance to the consultant in the various tasks of the project scope as described in section III.

#### Role of the Consultant

The consultant is to provide a technical service as outlined in the described tasks along with cost estimates. The consultant will also refer to their work as an extension of MORPC.

### ***REPORTING***

#### Final Report

As described in Section III with each part, the final deliverables are as follows:

- An asset inventory toolkit;
- A written report detailing and summarizing the work completed in parts 1 and 2.

## **VIII. 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. In such case, same will be returned to consultant unopened.

### *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 project. 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 consultant(s) 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.

**MORPC STATEMENTS ON DIVERSITY & INCLUSION**

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, 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.

**MORPC DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENTERPRISE (DBE)**

**COMPLIANCE/SUBCONTRACTING**

Working in cooperation with the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT), a 5 percent disadvantaged business enterprise (DBE) goal has been established for this contract per requirements of the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT). Respondents are expected to

meet or exceed this goal. DBE firms must be certified through the Ohio Unified Certification Program. This section shall include a description of how the contractor will meet or exceed the 5 percent DBE goal. MORPC will expect contractors to meet the DBE percentage included in their contract, and will require ongoing reporting of this percentage during the contract life. MORPC will also include DBE prompt payment requirements in all contracts.

List items of work that are proposed to be subcontracted for this project, the proposed utilization of the sub-contractor(s), the name(s) of the sub-contractor(s), and the percent of work expected to be performed by each. Discuss their qualifications and the basis for their selection.

### ***CONTRACTING REQUIREMENTS***

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

#### **Compensation**

- A not-to-exceed contract amount based on satisfactory work performed and services delivered will be entered into after negotiations between MORPC and the selected firm.
- Alternative compensation models may be considered.

#### **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.