

# Request for Proposal for Consultant Services for Development of County-Wide Vision for Economic Vitality in Genesee County, Michigan

Flint, Michigan began its descent into economic distress during the worldwide economic crisis of the 1970s and never fully recovered. Critical employers such as General Motors left the community, leaving thousands without work and the means to support their families. As a result, Flint and the surrounding communities in Genesee County began to struggle with increased poverty, high crime rates, infant mortality, and property foreclosures. This was only exacerbated by failing infrastructure, abnormally low literacy rates, and a rapidly shrinking tax base.

From an economic development standpoint, several other challenges often hinder positive forward momentum that if addressed, would benefit the community. National perception of the current state of Flint, as a result of the Water Crisis and public safety, continue to pervade the public eye, drawing attention, both beneficial and damaging, to struggles our community faces. Additionally, the retention and attraction of skilled talent continues to create challenges for area employers as they struggle to maintain the workforce necessary to do business.

With these challenges and great potential in mind, the City of Flint, Genesee County, and the Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce have formed a partnership to create a county-wide vision for economic vitality, with maximum buy-in and participation from identified stakeholders. Currently, the City of Flint is in the process of developing a plan for business development within the city boundaries, while Genesee County is working on a comprehensive land use and transportation plan for the county. The creation of this additional plan be completed through direct collaboration, engagement, and data sharing with each planning partner, while simultaneously broadening the focus to include Business, Talent, and Place, to for the entire county.

## **PROPOSED CONSULTANT SCOPE OF WORK**

Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce Staff will work with the Consultant to engage stakeholders in large and/or small group discussion in the interest of gathering input and creating a county-wide vision for economic vitality that considers Business, Talent, and Place as the three drivers of the economy. Input on the county's current and desired economic state should be collected from named stakeholders that include, community leaders, economic development partners, engaged residents, and Chamber Board/Staff. The project will be aligned with parallel planning efforts occurring with the City of Flint and Genesee County Planning Commission, and will require coordination of efforts and collation of conclusions. The desired output for this additional plan will be a document that considers the data gathered, the stakeholders involved, and the goals of these efforts, but delineates a vision for Genesee County's economic vitality that is "owned" by a variety of engaged stakeholders.

Once a county-vision has been defined, the stakeholders should be reconvened in working groups to determine the strategies required to reach the vision. This will include developing action plans with a timeline and needed resources, as well as a communication plan that details the implementation strategy, and a dashboard to measure ongoing economic indicators. The Consultant will then work with staff to further define relationships and create a funding plan or resource guide for implementation.

## PREPARING A RESPONSE

By submitting a response, respondents represent that they have thoroughly examined and are familiar with the scope of work outline in this RFP and are capable of performing the work to achieve the objectives. The submittal must demonstrate that the respondent has sufficient and appropriate resources to complete the project. Consultants must designate the project lead and report where his/her primary office is located. Any proposed subconsultants must be identified.

## CONTENTS OF RESPONSE

Respondents are asked to organize their responses in accordance with the following format:

1. Cover letter. Provide a letter of introduction with a brief description of your firm indicating the primary office location for the performance of this project, the type of firm, areas of specialization, and the project lead. Include company name, address, contact name, title, phone number, fax number, email and website address. Identify all subconsultants that will be involved.
2. Project Approach. Provide an outline description of how your firm would approach the scope of services, including the following elements:
  - a. a plan for stakeholder engagement and facilitation methodology;
  - b. a description of how the process would be inclusive and considerate of a variety of stakeholders;
  - c. a description of how data will be used (during planning and in implementation strategies);
  - d. a description of how your firm will partner with the lead planning organizations (what do you see as the role of the City of Flint, Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce, and Genesee County?);
  - e. Indication of any unique datasets, or innovative tools to be used
  - f. demonstrated knowledge of economic development principles and trends
  - g. plans to meet the required timeline for project completion, July 30, 2019
3. Key Personnel. Please include the bios of personnel to be assigned to the project during the specified project timeline and indicate what role these individuals will play in the project. Include the team's availability/access (on-site, virtual, etc.) and experience working with other planning firms.
4. References. For the prime consultant and all subconsultants, provide reference information and brief project descriptions for at least three (3) recent or current clients. Reference projects should be recently completed within the last two (2) years and *similar* in nature to those described in this RFP. Please include the following information:
  - a. Name of client
  - b. Name and title of client's primary contact
  - c. Telephone number, fax number, email address, and mailing address of the client's primary contact.
  - d. A brief description of the types of services provided the overall scope of the project, duration of the project and the current status of the project.
  - e. Example documents or project deliverables

5. Budget. Show total costs for services specified including labor and direct costs, associated travel costs, materials and any other requirements (each enumerated separately) as may be required to furnish the work. Provide a summary of cost and percentage of total project effort by proposed task (i.e. time spent on in-person stakeholder engagement, planning and preparation, writing, administrative activities, etc.).
6. Length of Proposal. All submissions should be clearly marked “*County-Wide Vision for Economic Vitality: Partner Engagement Strategy.*” Electronic submissions, in PDF format, are preferred. Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce will only accept complete submittals. No partial submissions will be accepted. Your submittal is limited to 25 pages maximum, with an additional two pages maximum for the cover page, one page for the response page, and up to 15 pages for any appendix. **If bids are submitted via mail or fax, it is the bidder’s responsibility to confirm receipt by the Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce prior to the scheduled bid deadline.**
7. Selection Criteria: Responses to this proposal will be evaluated on the following criteria: Qualification and experience of prime consultant and any subconsultants with projects of similar scope and size; quality and strategic fit of the proposed approach to the work; demonstrated ability to work with a variety of stakeholders and planning partners; demonstrated knowledge of economic development principles and trends; sufficient staff for all required work; history of successful performance on similar projects; reasonable cost of the study; and lastly, demonstration of commitment for meeting the project schedule.

## **TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

### *Timeline*

Timeline for completion of this process is July 2019. Deadlines for project components are as follows:

- Vision for Genesee County’s Economic Vitality – December 2018
- Strategy for Reaching Vision – April 2019
- Implementation Resource Guide – July 2019

### *Incurred Costs*

This request for proposals does not commit the Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce to award a contract or pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a response to this request. The Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce will not be liable in any way for any costs incurred by the respondents in replying to this RFP.

### *Right to Cancel*

The Flint & Genesee Chamber reserves the right to cancel this RFP at any time and to decide not to consider any or all of the respondents submitting information in response to this request.

### *Severability*

If any terms or provisions of the Request for Proposal are found to be illegal or unenforceable, then such term or provision shall be deemed stricken and the remaining portions of this document shall remain in full force and effect.

### *Collusion*

By responding, the firm implicitly states that his/her proposal has not been made in connection with any other competing firm submitting a separate response to this RFP; is in all respects fair and has been submitted without collusion or fraud.

#### *Oral Presentation/Interview*

Oral presentations are an option of the Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce and may or may not be conducted. If presentations are requested, it should be noted that they will be for fact finding purposes, not negotiations.

#### *Affirmative Action*

The Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce is an equal opportunity employer and requires an affirmative action policy from all consultants and vendors as a condition of doing business, as per Federal Order 11246. By signing the Response Page for this RFP, all respondents agree to this condition of doing business.

#### *Assigning/Transferring of agreement*

The selected firm is prohibited from assigning, transferring, conveying, subletting or otherwise disposing of the resulting agreement or its rights, title, or interest therein or its power to execute such an agreement to any other person, company or corporation without prior consent and approval in writing from the Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce.

For questions or additional information, contact Julie Hipps, Administrative Coordinator, Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce, 810.600.1404 or [jhipps@flintandgenesee.org](mailto:jhipps@flintandgenesee.org).

Questions regarding this RFP should be submitted via email by 4:00 pm, September 21, 2018. A list of all questions received, with responses and any additional announcements will be posted on [www.flintandgenesee.org](http://www.flintandgenesee.org), September 24, 2018. Any additional announcements or addendums will be posted at [www.flintandgenesee.org](http://www.flintandgenesee.org).

RFP responses must be submitted to the Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce by 4:00 pm, September 28, 2018 to:

#### *County-Wide Vision for Economic Vitality: Partner Engagement Strategy*

Julie Hipps, Administrative Coordinator  
Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce  
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phone: 810.600.1404