



RFQ Amendment

Published April 24, 2024 in response to questions received at
Pre-Submittal Conference

1. Q. How does this project align with other Department initiatives?
A: All projects embrace the agency's mission to "Create economic opportunities to increase choices for all South Carolinians".
2. Q. How will the Department select communities for the program?
A: A group of program managers were given a list of Tier III and IV counties/communities in which they recommended their Top 5 candidates for the project. The "votes" were tallied to form the first group of communities.
3. Q. Will communities that complete a strategic plan be eligible for special funding or special programs of the Department?
A: Funds have been budgeted to finance projects established in the strategic plans.
4. Q. Does the Department intend to contract with one consultant to perform one strategic plan for a community that covers the subjects (e.g., housing, culture, business attraction, etc.) listed in the RFQ or multiple consultants who will do individual studies in the subjects?
A: A maximum of 3 consultants may be selected. Communities will be given the names and websites of the selected consultants to choose from.
5. Q. Is there a previous contract for these services/program that can be shared? If so, can the Department share an example deliverable?
A: This is the first time the Rural Program has conducted a project of this type. As a result, there are no prior contracts/deliverables to share.
6. Q. What is the duration of the contract?
A: Communities will have 24 months to complete projects in which grant funds have been awarded.
7. Q. Describe the expected deliverable for "conceptual renderings." Are "conceptual renderings" expected for every strategic plan?
A: Conceptual renderings may be applicable where appropriate for certain projects, i.e., new park, building/office renovation
8. Q. Does the Department have an estimate of the number of communities/projects per year?
A: Approximately 5 communities per year
9. Q. Will the Department share the overall budget and per strategic plan budget?
A: No

10. Q. How many consultants will the Department of Commerce select, and will those firms be assigned to counties, or will counties be able to select their firms? If the latter, how will that process work?

A: DOC will select no more than three (3) consultants. Counties will be allowed to select the firm they wish to work with. Counties will be given the consultants name and website, and they will inform DOC which company they have chosen.

11. Q. What is the Department of Commerce's ideal timeline for the work to be completed (from start/kick-off meeting through the final deliverable)?

A: Consultants should follow their normal client engagement process. However, this initiative is not expected to be a "deep dive" but rather a session to identify the low hanging fruit to be implemented immediately. Projects must be completed in 24 months.

12. Q. Is the Department of Commerce providing 100% of the funding for each rural county, or will the county be required to provide a match?

A: DOC will pay 100% of the consulting fees. Counties will be required to provide a 10% for the projects established from their strategic plans.

13. Q. Depending on the funding sources, does the Department of Commerce have a per county budget for this project?

A: DOC has identified the counties for this round of funding. The Rural Development Team has been given a budget for consulting fees.

14. Q. Will Land Surveying portion of this contract may be available. Will surveying be broken out?

A: Land surveying is not a part of this initial RFP. Land surveying services may be required for future projects created as a result of opportunities identified during the strategic planning process. Unfortunately, those opportunities are unknown at this time as potential projects requiring land surveying would be established in the future.

15. Q. On the call there was discussion about the selection of three firms that will be provided to the five communities to select a consultant for services. Is teaming allowed?

A: Potential firms are not prohibited to form teams. However, it is important to note that our agency will only engage with one primary firm for the project. While teaming is allowed during the proposal phase, the selected primary firm will be the sole point of contact for the duration of the project.

16. Q. It was mentioned that websites for the selected three firms will be provided to the five communities. Do you anticipate this will be the only information provided to the communities?

A: The name(s) of the companies and links to the company's website will be supplied to the communities. If there will be a specific consultant assigned to handle inquiries for this project, please let us know upon being selected.

17. Q. It appears the contract for services will be between the DOC and the firm and not the community and the firm. Please confirm.

A: The contract for services will be between DOC and the firm.

18. Q. On the call there were discussions about forms SE-210 and SE-610. The RFQ states to include form SF-330. Please clarify all forms required for the submission and any subsequent page limitations.

A: Please refer to the SE-610 that was posted in SCBO and the RFQ document that can be found at the

links below for information to submit and page limitations.

<https://www.sccommerce.com/request-qualifications-download-rfq-rural-development-strategic-planning-south-carolina-0>

19. **Q.** Must all firms submit a Standard Form 330 even if they are not architecture/engineering? The form does not provide appropriate answer choices for community and economic development consulting firms that are not involved in architecture and engineering.

A: Yes, the Standard Federal Form 330 is a required form with the South Carolina Office of State Engineer.

20. **Q.** Was the statement regarding form SE-610 just that firms need to submit all information requested on the form or is some acknowledgement of the form needed?

A: Yes, the firm need to submit all information requested on the SE-610. No acknowledgement of the form is needed.

FIRMS THAT REQUESTED ACCESS TO THE PRE-SUBMITTAL CONFERENCE

- Boudreaux
- Colliers Engineering & Design
- Crystal Morphis, CEcD
- H& M Surveying, LLC
- McMillian/Pazdan/Smith Architecture
- MRB Group
- Renaissance Planning
- VFG Consulting Group

Presentation slides from the pre-submittal conference are included on the following pages.