
**Shenandoah Valley GO Virginia Region 8
Request for Proposal
Economic Growth and Diversification Plan Consultant**

Introduction

The Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission (“CSPDC”) is one of the support organizations for the Shenandoah Valley GO Virginia Region 8 and responsible for the Request for Proposal (“RFP”) and oversight and management of the Economic Growth and Diversification Plan for the region. As such, the CSPDC invites qualified firms or agencies to submit proposals for the development of the Economic Growth and Diversification Plan in accordance with the requirements set forth in this RFP.

Purpose

The purpose of this Request for Proposals (“RFP”) is to solicit sealed proposals to establish a contract through competitive negotiation with a qualified source(s) to provide professional services as described herein for the development of the Economic Growth and Diversification Plan for GO Virginia Regional Council 8 – Shenandoah Valley.

Proposal Inquiries/Point of Contact

All inquiries concerning this RFP should be submitted by email citing the RFP title to:

Bonnie S. Riedesel, Executive Director
Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission
bonnie@cspdc.org

Potential Offerors must limit all contact, whether verbal or written, pertaining to this RFP, to the designated point of contact for the duration of the RFP process. Failure to do so may jeopardize further consideration of an Offeror’s proposal.

Timeframe and Key Dates

RFP issued by Region 8	May 9, 2017
Proposal due	May 19, 2017, no later than 4:00 PM EDT
Consultant contract issued	Week of June 5, 2017

Glossary of Terms

The following terms and definitions apply to this RFP and any resulting contract:

- **Contractor** – The term “Contractor” refers to the person/firm awarded a contract to provide the services required in this solicitation.
- **Offeror** – The term “Offeror” refers to a person/firm who makes an offer by submitting a proposal in response to this solicitation.

Submittal Requirements

Consultants shall submit one (1) electronic copy and five (5) paper copies of the proposal to:

Bonnie Riedesel, Executive Director
Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission
112 MacTanly Place
Staunton, VA 24401
bonnie@cspdc.org

Proposals must be submitted on 8.5”x11” paper. Proposals shall not exceed a total of twenty (20) pages. Faxed or CD/disk copies of a proposal will not be considered.

Deadline for Receipt

Proposals are due by 4:00 PM on Friday, May 19, 2017. Proposals received after the deadline will be rejected.

At a minimum, proposals must contain the following information:

- A description of the approach and methodologies to be used
- The total cost as well as the cost of each study component
- The name of the project lead and members of the team along with their resume(s) and respective experience in focused plan development
- Additional data analysis that may be required to complete the work beyond what has been previously provided to regional councils by DHCD
- Description of efforts to maximize stakeholder engagement and participation in plan development; including working with the Region 8 Economic Growth and Diversification Plan Sub-committee and Economic Development Directors in the region
- Timeframe for delivery of draft and final plan

Objective

In 2016, The General Assembly passed legislation and created the *Virginia Growth and Opportunity Board and Fund (VGOF)*. The GO Virginia Board has 24 members, is representative of the diversity of the Commonwealth, and includes representation from the Virginia House and Senate, gubernatorial appointments, and private sector leadership. The Commonwealth was

divided into nine (9) administrative regions that have formed Regional Councils which have been certified by the Board and will be the entity that applies for funding. Representation on the council include: business, education, government, civic or community leaders, economic and workforce development professionals, local government officials, regional planning entities and nonprofit representatives. The VGOF provides state grants to regions to fund projects identified by regional councils and approved by the Board as vital to the efforts to diversify the regional economy, strengthen their workforce, and support collaborative programs between at least two or more localities that will lead to the creation of higher paying jobs (above the median wage).

In order to assist the nine regional councils designated by the Virginia Growth and Opportunity Board (the “Board”) to develop their growth and diversification plans, Regional Council 8, is seeking assistance with developing the Economic Growth and Diversification Plan for the region. The plan is a pre-requisite for establishing regional priorities for the use of project funds.

The Economic Growth and Diversification Plan will be a guiding document that each Regional Council will use to:

1. Identify economic opportunities, needs, and challenges
2. Establish priorities among identified opportunities
3. Outline needed enhancements where GO Virginia funds can support collaborative programs between at least two or more localities

The Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has provided baseline measures for each region including:

1. Value of and change in average and median personal and household income, annually and cumulative since 1996 (household income per Census or BEA personal income)
2. Employment totals and employment growth by major industry sector, annually and cumulative since 1996 (use 2 digit NAICS codes for sectors, i.e. 31-33 for Manufacturing)
3. Net job growth annually and cumulative since 1996
4. Total employment numbers & unemployment rates annually and cumulative since 1996
5. Workforce commuting patterns by county and region annually since 1996
6. Total and change in the number and proportion of jobs supported through revenues derived from out-of-state sources, annually and cumulative since 1996
7. Jobs created by companies less than 5 years old annually and cumulatively since 1996
8. Jobs created by companies more than 10 years old annually and cumulatively since 1996
9. New company creation and destruction annually and cumulatively since 1996
10. Cost of local government services per capita annually since 1996
11. Number of college graduates annually since 1996
12. Average hourly wages by sector annually since 1996

The Plan will guide the Regional Council in supporting programs that include, but are not limited to, efforts to:

1. Recruit and/or retain the talent needed in the region
2. Grow existing businesses, develop existing clusters, and to scale up small and mid-size companies
3. Establish start-ups from commercializing university based research and supporting entrepreneurs
4. Support potential joint economic development activities such as site development and training initiatives

The implementation of the Plan should focus on the creation of higher paying jobs for the region that will bring new investment, enhance the competitiveness of the region, and diversify the economy of the region, in turn spurring the growth of the new Virginia economy.

Background of GO Virginia Region 8

Shenandoah Valley GO Virginia Region 8 is comprised of the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission and the Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission. GO Virginia Region 8 includes the footprint of the Shenandoah Valley Partnership and the entire service area of the Shenandoah Valley Workforce Development Board. Three community colleges and numerous universities and colleges are located in the region. GO Virginia Region 8 includes 10 counties, 6 cities, and 16 towns with a total population of over 525,000.

The State GO Virginia Board approved the Shenandoah Valley Regional Council and certified Region 8 on March 14, 2017. The 28-member Regional Council represents large and small business, higher and K-12 education, elected officials, local government, and economic and workforce development entities.

Support Organizations

- The Shenandoah Valley Partnership (SVP) will serve as the face/voice of GO Virginia and point of contact for the region, staff the Regional Council, organize Regional Council meetings, and advise the Regional Council on projects.
- The Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission (NSVRC) will act as fiscal agent and be responsible for receiving and disbursing GO Virginia funds, track spending, grant management, financial reporting, etc.
- The Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission (CSPDC) will be responsible for development and maintenance of the Economic Growth and Diversification Plan, oversee the work of consultants and staff the Economic Growth and Diversification Plan subcommittee.
- The Shenandoah Valley Workforce Development Board (SVWDB) will administer any workforce-related projects approved by the Regional Council.

Requirements

The Economic Growth and Diversification plan should be developed based on the criteria in the guidelines as well as the Evaluation Criteria for the Plan as approved by the Board and available on the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) website.

General Requirements include:

1. Conduct a review of existing documents, plans, and strategies in the Region to include, but not be limited to, the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the Central Shenandoah Valley, SVWDB's Workforce Development Plan 2016-2020, and Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission Stronger Economies Together (SET) Report.
2. Data on growth of the region including both historical trends and comparative data to other similar regions, the state, and the nation
3. Identify significant drivers of the existing economy and growth trends of these drivers
4. Identify existing efforts to diversify and grow and/or retain higher paying jobs and to enhance access to such jobs.
5. Identify existing or potential business sectors or clusters which can lead to sustainable, scalable, future growth in the region and the process used to select those sectors or clusters including how growth in them can be achieved. The identification of such sectors or clusters must be based on empirical data and which is based on results that are realistic given the drivers of the region's economy.
For purposes of the plan, a cluster is a group of companies in a business sector with an affiliated supply chain, the relationships between and among industries in a region that support economic growth, workforce training resources, and other related assets.
6. Identify workforce gaps in the availability of immediately employable talent in both the existing significant drivers of the economy as well as the suggested sectors or clusters and prioritized opportunity areas. If a gap exists, identify current efforts to address, being specific as to the skills/credentialing/experience/education required and whether these efforts are adequate to address the shortage. Activities to import talent from outside Virginia to address gaps should also be considered.
7. Commuting patterns (both existing and potential) for the workforce to other regions/states and whether such activity affects the region's ability to attract and or retain high paying jobs.
8. Identify intraregional economic differences and how the plan will address the goals of GO Virginia in a way that benefits all parts of the region. The GO Virginia Board and staff will work with regions that have similar priorities and project ideas to encourage the regions to work together or seek joint opportunities.
9. Potential performance metrics as determined and defined by the Region based upon direction from the Board.

Please note, in addition to providing data for the GO Virginia 8 region, data also shall be provided by Planning District, sub-region, and county/city basis as available.

DHCD, in concert with the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP), has provided baseline measures as well as an initial economic analysis that should be used to inform additional analysis for the development of this plan.

Reporting Requirements

The Contractor must comply with requests for cost estimates of phases and timelines for deliverables. In addition, the Contractor must provide specific progress reports for current projects as requested by the Regional Council or its designee.

Deliverables

The Contractor must complete assignments and provide deliverables within required timeline and approved cost.

1. PDF and 10 colored copies of the final Economic Growth and Diversification Plan
2. PDF and 40 colored copies of an Executive Summary of the Economic Growth and Diversification Plan
3. PDF and 100 colored copies of infographic of the Economic Growth and Diversification Plan
4. PowerPoint of the Economic Growth and Diversification Plan to be used by the Regional Council and its partners
5. A minimum of four presentations to stakeholders/general public after approval of plan

Evaluation

Proposals shall be evaluated by the Regional Council using the following criteria:

- Overall suitability of the proposal and plans/methodology/approach to providing the requested services
- Demonstrated experience, qualifications, ability, and expertise of Offeror in providing the requested services
- Small, Women-Owned, and Minority-Owned Business Participation
- Timeframe for delivery of draft and final plan
- Total cost

Statement of Intent

The GO Virginia Regional Council 8 reserves the right to reject any or all responses to this Request for Proposals. The Regional Council will not reimburse costs of preparing and mailing the consultant proposals. The Regional Council reserves the right to ask for clarification in the proposal should the need arise.