

Survey, Media and Public Relations Support Services for Clean Air Partnership Campaign Request for Proposals (RFP)

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August 15, 2019 | CN22553

Omaha-Council Bluffs Metropolitan Area Planning Agency



Proposals should be submitted
by **4:30 p.m. CDT** on
September 6, 2019

1. Introduction & Background

The Omaha-Council Bluffs Metropolitan Area Planning Agency (MAPA) is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and Council of Governments (COG) representing the five-county Omaha-Council Bluffs metropolitan region. Its essential duties are twofold, one statutory and one voluntary. The statutory obligation, defined in Title 23 of the United States Code, is to undertake regional transportation planning and discharge fiduciary duties associated with programming and administration of Federal transportation funds. The voluntary duties relate to community economic development planning, and include assistance with disaster and recovery planning, administration of revolving loan funds, and preparation of community comprehensive plans. MAPA is governed by a board of directors, all of whom are elected officials representing local jurisdictions in the five-county region.

MAPA requests proposals from qualified firms with experience in public surveying, graphic design, marketing, advertising, and media buying and placement for assistance with the MAPA CMAQ Clean Air Partnership Campaign in 2020-2022. This project is anticipated to utilize federal Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality (CMAQ) funding. As such, this project is subject to all rules, regulations, and applicable laws including, but not limited to, the Nebraska Guidelines Manual for LPA Projects. The selected firm or team will provide creative, project management, and material production and sourcing support to MAPA and partner organizations' public education and outreach activities—including facilitation of a Clean Air Action Plan and Clean Air Partnership with regional stakeholders.

In 2010 and 2011, MAPA led a community-based planning initiative to address elevated ozone levels and to identify actions proactively which mitigate ozone in order to improve air quality and avoid going into non-attainment of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for ozone. This program spawned the "Little Steps, Big Impact" ozone campaign. Since that time, MAPA has conducted the Little Steps, Big Impact campaign during the ozone season to enhance public awareness and action to help reduce ozone forming emissions in the MAPA region. MAPA has received CMAQ funds since 2012 for this initiative and, through MAPA's Heartland 2050 Regional Vision, the current effort continues to make connections between land use decisions, transportation investments, and our natural environment.

The objective of the campaign is three-fold: 1) to enhance public awareness of ozone and other air quality issues which affect the MAPA region through targeted media placement and community outreach efforts, 2) to coordinate and communicate air quality-related efforts in the MAPA region, and 3) to promote the implementation of Travel Demand Management (TDM) strategies to reduce single-occupancy vehicle trips in the MAPA region. Specific emphasis will be placed around ozone "action days". The ozone action day framework is established in the Memorandum of Understanding between MAPA, Douglas County Health Department (DCHD) and the City of Omaha Public Works. Action days are declared based on the forecasts provided by DCHD, when the forecasted Air Quality Index (AQI) is at least 67 (equivalent to an ozone reading of 66 ppb).

MAPA staff constitute the Issuing Agent for this work, and will be charged with reviewing proposals, conducting interviews with respondents as appropriate, and making a recommendation to the MAPA Board of Directors on selection of a respondent for negotiation of contract services. MAPA reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to negotiate changes with any consultant. MAPA will not be liable for any cost incurred by any consultant prior to the execution of an agreement or contract. Furthermore, MAPA will not be liable for any costs incurred by the firms that are not specified in the contract.

The selected consultant/team will be required to complete the scope of work in accordance with any Terms and Conditions set by MAPA. Those terms and conditions will be transmitted to the firm selected for negotiation of a contract for services. MAPA is an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer. Descriptions of standards, tasks, and deliverables are included in the subsequent sections.

The time period for the initial selection will be one (1) year with MAPA having the option to utilize the selected firm annually for up to two (2) additional years.

2. Scope of Services

Work will be conducted on this project as part of the following tasks:

- **Task 1** – Project Management & Administration
- **Task 2** – Graphic & Media Design
- **Task 3** – Media Coordination & Purchasing
- **Task 4** – Community Outreach & Partnerships
- **Task 5** – Air Quality Awareness Survey

Task 1: Project Management & Administration

Coordinate project between firms performing work mentioned in the General Scope of Services and MAPA. Schedule and coordinate meetings with project management team to include MAPA, City of Omaha, DCHD, Metro, WELLCOM, and other stakeholders to monitor the air quality media campaign,

Task 2: Graphic & Media Design

Firms or teams must demonstrate a capacity to undertake the following tasks:

- 1) Develop and implement paid and earned media strategy including, but not limited to, paid advertising placement
- 2) Conceptualize and execute design of ads for selected media (print, web, TV and radio) centered on air quality awareness and issues in the Omaha metropolitan area consistent with the Little Steps Big Impact campaign. Ads may include information regarding specific transportation-related events and promotions.
- 3) Update the Little Steps Big Impact website & social media platforms to highlight air quality issues, community outreach activities, and provide additional website support as needed;
- 4) Develop marketing materials for meetings, briefings, presentations and other activities as determined by the project team.

Task 3: Media Coordination & Purchasing

Firms or teams must demonstrate a capacity to undertake the following tasks:

- 1) Perform due diligence on pricing the cost of advertising across media outlets and provide recommendations on the most effective means of marketing the campaign within the project budget. The anticipated total marketing budget for this campaign is limited and; therefore, the project approach must be strategic and cost-conscious;
- 2) Provide promotional copy which is formatted properly to media outlets and others directed by MAPA;

- 3) Coordinate with local meteorologists and other media outlets to inform the news media about the Little Steps Big Impact campaign and provide them with editorial and graphical media-friendly information.
- 4) Manage direct payments to media outlets and secure proper documentation of all advertising.

Task 4: Community Outreach & Partnerships

Community outreach will generally take three forms through the LSBI project:

1. *Employer Outreach:* Support MAPA's development of a network of potential corporations/businesses to promote the campaign and educate employees about the Little Steps campaign and alternative transportation opportunities. This effort will supplement employer outreach activities provided by WELLCOM.
2. *Clean Air Partnership:* Development of a Clean Air Partnership for the Omaha-Council Bluffs region through the Little Steps effort to promote broader coalition of partners on air quality issues. Potential members of this group include public utilities, Nebraska Department of Environment & Energy (NDEE), the Nebraska Clean Energy Alliance (NCEA) and members of the Heartland 2050 Natural Resources Committee, as examples. Clean Air Partnership meetings are anticipated to occur less frequently than Steering Committee Meetings and focus on air quality-related efforts beyond the marketing campaign.
3. *School Ozone Monitor Program:* MAPA also plans to continue the Little Steps Ozone Monitoring program with area schools, and this outreach in coordination with local educators, DCHD and Omaha Air Quality Control. This includes implementation and promotion of air quality curriculum developed through the LSBI program.

Task 5: Air Quality Awareness Survey

Telephone surveys of air quality awareness in the MAPA Region have been conducted since the spring of 2012. In recent years online survey tools have been used to supplement telephone surveys and reach a broader demographic. An update of the telephone and online surveys will be completed annually to determine the effectiveness of the program. The survey is intended to be conducted annually in order to monitor public awareness of air quality issues.

3. Project Schedule

The anticipated project schedule is included below. It is recommended that key personnel hold the interview date on their calendars for a potential interview.

| Activity | Date |
|---|---------------------------|
| RFP Released | August 15, 2019 |
| Deadline for Written Questions | August 28, 2019 |
| Responses to Written Questions | August 30, 2019 |
| Deadline for Submittals | September 6, 2019 |
| Proposals Reviewed and Consultants Short-Listed | September 13, 2019 |
| Short-Listed Consultants Interviewed | September 18 and 19, 2019 |
| Consultant Selection | September 20, 2019 |
| Scope and Fee Negotiation Finalized | November 8, 2019 |
| Finance Committee Approval | December 4, 2019 |
| MAPA Board Approval | December 12, 2019 |
| Project Start Date | January 1, 2020 |

4. Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation and selection of the winning proposal will be based on the qualifications of the responding firm. A consultant evaluation team made up of representatives from the City of Omaha and MAPA will screen the proposals to ensure they meet the minimum requirements of the proposal format. A review of qualifying proposals will identify potential firms that most closely meet the needs of the project. Upon review of the proposals, the top three (3) candidate firms will be ranked in order of preference and interviewed.

Factors that will be considered by the selection team include the following:

| Criteria | Points |
|---|------------|
| 1. Qualifications and experience of the firm, including reference checks, achievements, and financial stability | 15 |
| 2. Qualifications and experience of principal consulting staff proposed to work on the project | 30 |
| 3. Proposed project approach and schedule | 30 |
| 4. Proposed project presentation and communications approach | 20 |
| 5. Ability of the firm to integrate the study into present workload | 5 |
| Total Points | 100 |

5. Submission of Proposals

Seven (7) printed copies and one electronic version (PDF preferred) of the proposal must be received in the MAPA offices by **4:30 PM on September 6, 2019**. Proposals may not exceed 20 pages in length, including appendices and/or supplementary exhibits. A table of contents will not be counted toward the page limit when included in proposals. Proposals must include proof of insurance and compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act (not counted toward page limit).

The Issuing Officer, identified below, is the sole point of contact regarding the RFP from the date of issuance until selection of the successful vendor.

Sue Cutsforth
 Issuing Officer
 Metropolitan Area Planning Agency
 2222 Cuming Street
 Omaha, NE 68102
scutsforth@mapacog.org

From the issue date of this RFP until announcement of the successful vendor, vendors may contact only the Issuing Officer regarding this RFP. Vendors may be disqualified if they contact any employee or representative of MAPA other than the Issuing Officer regarding this RFP. Questions only about the procurement process will be accepted by MAPA; all of these must be **submitted in writing by August 28, 2019**. Answers to all questions will be posted on the MAPA website by close of business on **August 30, 2019**.

Firms whose proposals are not accepted will be notified as soon as the selected firm has been approved and a contract has been negotiated.

6. Submittal Requirements

The proposal shall include the following items and be organized in the manner specified below.

A. Front Cover

The proposal shall include a front cover that identifies the Prime Consultant, Sub-consultants (if applicable) and the title of the project or service

B. Letter of Interest

The proposal shall include a letter of interest outlining briefly the firm's understanding of the work, as well as a general statement introducing the firm and individuals to be involved. The letter of interest shall not exceed two (2) pages.

C. Organizational Chart

The proposal shall include an organizational chart not to exceed one (1) page.

D. Firm Profile & Qualifications

The proposal shall include general information about the firm, the firm's area of expertise, and the firm's official name and address. Additionally, the proposal shall furnish the following qualifications to be considered for award of the contract:

1. Name of the anticipated project manager and his or her relevant qualifications and experience on similar projects, along with those of any ancillary technical and management personnel who will be involved with the project.
 2. Experience of the firm in performing similar work and examples of this work.
 3. Name and location of additional consulting firms (subcontractors) whose use is anticipated in order to complete the scope of work, accompanied by explanation of the specific tasks they will perform and the percentage of overall project work.
 4. Statement and demonstration of ability to integrate this contract into the present and anticipated workload of each key team member for the duration of the project.
- The firms profile and qualifications shall not exceed ten (10) pages.

E. Project Approach

The proposal shall include the firm's approach to successfully accomplish the tasks listed in the RFP successfully. This should include focus on technical approach and ability to present and communicate the findings in a compelling manner. (**NOTE:** The detailed Scope of Services will be negotiated with the selected consultant at the time of contract development.) The discussion of the scope of work shall not exceed ten (10) pages.

F. Proposed Project Schedule

The proposal shall include a project schedule outlining the time frame and estimated completion date of each major task identified in the proposed scope of work. The consultant team shall also explain its approach to the project schedule in narrative form. The project schedule shall not exceed three (3) pages. Due to related planning and transit efforts underway, the consultant should be prepared to work on the study on an aggressive timeline. The consultant shall provide what he or she believes is a realistic timeline to fully complete the tasks in an expeditious, effective manner.

G. Conflict of Interest Disclosure

The proposal shall include a completed Consultant Conflict of Interest Disclosure form for the prime consultant and any sub consultants.

H. Systems of Award Management (SAM) Registration

Documentation that applicant firm has current SAM registration or that registration has been initiated. Registration information can be found at <https://www.sam.gov/portal/SAM>.

I. Proof of Insurance

The proposal shall include proof of insurance for the prime contractor and any sub consultants.

8. Additional Submittal Requirements

1. All material in the submittal must be on 8½ x 11 paper printed on one (1) side, single or double spaced.
2. Submittal covers and dividers between the sections are allowed and not included in the page limit.
3. Fold-out pages are not allowed.
4. Submittals are to be spiral bound. No 3-ring binders.

Five (5) copies of the submittal must be sent to the following:

Sue Cutsforth
Issuing Officer
Metropolitan Area Planning Agency
2222 Cuming Street
Omaha, NE 68102

All information must be received by **4:30 p.m. on September 6, 2019**. No exceptions to this deadline will be given.

9. Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) Policy

The Omaha –Council Bluffs Metropolitan Area Planning Agency (MAPA) has established a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program in accordance with regulations of the U.S Department of Transportation (DOT), 49 CFR Part 26. MAPA has received Federal Financial assistance from the Department of Transportation, and as a condition of receiving this assistance, MAPA has signed an assurance that it will comply with 49 CFR Part 26.

It is the policy of MAPA to ensure that DBEs, as defined in part 26, have an equal opportunity to receive and participate in DOT-assisted contracts. It is also our policy:

1. To ensure nondiscrimination in the award and administration of DOT assisted contracts;
2. To create a level playing field on which DBEs can compete fairly for DOT assisted contracts;
3. To ensure that the DBE Program is tailored narrowly in accordance with applicable law;

4. To ensure that only firms that meet 49 CFR Part 26 eligibility standards fully are permitted to participate as DBEs;
5. To help remove barriers to the participation of DBEs in DOT assisted contracts;
6. To assist the development of firms that can compete successfully in the market place outside the DBE Program.

The following assurance is to be included on all DOT-assisted contracts:

“The contractor, sub recipient or subcontractor shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, or sex in the performance of this contract. The contractor shall carry out applicable requirements of 49 CFR part 26 in the award and administration of DOT-assisted contracts. Failure by the contractor to carry out these requirements is a material breach of this contract, which may result in the termination of this contract, or such other remedy as the recipient deems appropriate.”

10. General Terms and Conditions

1. **Conflicts of Interest** – The proposer shall disclose any known or potential conflicts of interest with MAPA and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The proposer must declare that the proposer is not currently, and will not during the performance of any services for MAPA, participate in any other work involving a third party with interests in conflict currently or likely to be in conflict with MAPA’s interests without MAPA’s approval. All sub-consultants must submit a conflict of interest form as well.
2. **SAM Registration**-All prospective consulting firms must be listed in the U.S. Federal Contractor Registration database known as SAM (System for Award Management) to be considered for this project.
3. **Amendments to the RFP** – MAPA reserves the right to amend or cancel any or all parts of this RFP. Revisions to the RFP shall be posted on the MAPA website at least three (3) full business days prior to the deadline for submittal of responses.
4. **Non-commitment of MAPA** – This RFP does not commit MAPA to award a contract, to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a response to this request, or to procure or contract for services.
5. **Confidentiality** – Before award of the contract, all responses to this RFP will be designated confidential to the extent permitted by the Nebraska Public Records Law (84-712). After award of the contract (or if not awarded, after rejection of all responses), all responses will be regarded as public records and will be subject to review by the public. Any language purporting to render all or portions of the responses confidential will be regarded as non-effective and will be disregarded.

6. **Access to Records and Reports** – The proposer acknowledges the selected consultant firm will give MAPA, NDOT, FHWA, and the Comptroller General of the United States access to any books, documents, papers and records of the consultant firm which pertain directly to the contract for the purposes of making audits, examinations, excerpts, and transcriptions. Related contractual documents will be maintained for no less than three years after the date of termination or expiration of the contract.
7. **Termination** – MAPA will retain the right to terminate the contract for convenience or default. These clauses will be incorporated into the contract with the selected consultant firm.
8. **Civil Rights** – MAPA is in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, as amended, section 303 of the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, section 202 of the Americans with Disabilities act of 1990, and Federal transit law. Thus, clauses relating to nondiscrimination and equal employment opportunity (race, color, creed, national origin, sex, and disabilities) will be included in the contract with the selected consultant firm.
9. **Drug Free Workplace** – MAPA has established and maintains drug-free workplace policies. The selected consultant firm and all sub-consultants must have established and maintain drug-free workplace policies as well, such as those set forth in the Federal Drug Free Workplace Act of 1988.

11. Award of Contract

MAPA reserves the right to negotiate with the selected firm on matters related to project cost, or technical or other considerations that arise following announcement of the award of the contract. A decision to contract with the selected firm will be made by the MAPA Board of Directors following a recommendation by MAPA planning staff. Subject to selection and successful negotiation, MAPA intends to sign a contract on or about December 12, 2019 with the objective of the selected firm beginning work on or about January 1, 2020 and concluding the work in December of 2020.