

RESILIENCE AUTHORITY

Annapolis and Anne Arundel County

Request for Qualifications

Building, Design, and Consulting Services for Resilience Infrastructure Projects

Issue Date: July 18, 2024
Submission Deadline: August 19, 2024; 5:00PM EST
Email to: resilienceauthority@aacounty.org
Approval Period: Five Years ~ Reviewed Annually

1. Statement of Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is for the Resilience Authority of Annapolis and Anne Arundel County, Inc. (the “Authority”) to obtain information from qualified companies and organizations (“Applicants”) to undertake local climate resilience and mitigation projects that will support flood control, ecosystem resilience, shoreline protection, carbon sequestration, structural resilience, and other community-based projects and programs.
- 1.2. This RFQ is issued solely for information and planning purposes and does not constitute a Request for Proposals (RFP) or a promise to issue an RFP in the future. Applicants are hereby advised that the Authority will not pay for any information or administrative costs incurred in response to this RFQ. All costs associated with responding to this RFQ will be solely at the Applicant’s expense.
- 1.3. The Authority is seeking Applicants with expertise in the design, engineering, fundraising, financing, permitting, implementation, maintenance, monitoring, and long-term management of Resilience Infrastructure.

2. Background

- 2.1. In July 2021 Anne Arundel County (the “County”) and the City of Annapolis (the “City”), pursuant to Maryland Code, passed legislation to establish the County’s first multi-jurisdictional climate resilience financing Authority with the ability to finance, manage, and support resilience projects within the County and the City. The Authority’s investments and activities will support those projects that directly mitigate climate change including sea level rise, nuisance flooding, storm events, erosion, and rising temperatures.
- 2.2. Generally, Resilience Infrastructure means infrastructure that mitigates the effects of climate change for the general welfare or safety of the public. More specifically, and for this RFQ, Resilience Infrastructure includes flood barriers, shoreline protection, nature-based ecosystem resilience, green spaces, and stormwater infrastructure.

3. Proposed Solution and Approach

- 3.1. The Authority is seeking an implementation partner to establish Resilience Infrastructure projects to include nature-based solutions to road flooding, shoreline protection and nature-based ecosystem resilience projects on public and private lands.
- 3.2. The successful Applicant must have the experience, expertise, and financial capacity to simultaneously implement multiple projects under one or more programs including the management and administration of grant-based funding in the event multiple contracts are awarded.
- 3.3. The Authority is not a planning agency and will work in direct partnership with the City and the County planning, public works, and emergency management agencies to identify the most vulnerable infrastructure assets and develop action strategies to mitigate those impacts.

4. Instructions for Responding

- 4.1. Applicants that are responding to this RFQ are requested to email their written responses by 5:00 pm on August 19, 2024, to Kristina Alexander, Resilience Associate of the Resilience Authority of Annapolis and Anne Arundel County at: resilienceauthority@aacounty.org.
- 4.2. Applicants are responsible for ensuring any proposal submissions are received timely by the Authority. The Authority will not be held responsible for any technology issues or power outages that may arise outside the Authority's control that may negatively impact an Applicant's proposal submission or delay the Authority's receipt of such submission.
- 4.3. Responses must include a cover page clearly marked with the Applicant's name, address, phone number, and email address.

5. Inquiries and Questions

- 5.1. All correspondence and questions related to the RFQ should be directed in writing to Kristina Alexander, Resilience Associate of the Resilience Authority at: resilienceauthority@aacounty.org. All questions must be submitted five working days in advance of August 19, 2024 at 5:00 p.m. EST.

6. Review and Qualification

- 6.1. An Applicant's qualifications will be reviewed by the Authority's Staff and Board Members (the "Reviewers"). The Reviewers will verify responses against the selection criteria listed below. Any Applicants not meeting the selection criteria will not be considered. Applicants meeting the criteria may be contacted for subsequent interview(s) and/or information prior to the Authority's final selection.
- 6.2. The goal of the Authority's contracting and procurement endeavors is to ensure the best use of public funds to serve the public purpose of fulfilling the Authority's mission while adhering to all professional and ethical standards.
- 6.3. The Authority is committed to ensuring that all funds entrusted to it are appropriately allocated using fair, ethical, equitable, responsible, and transparent practices. These values guide the Authority's conduct and decision-making practices related to procurements, bids, estimates, agreements, contracts, and other formal commitments.

7. Applicant Qualifications

- 7.1. The Authority shall take into account the below qualification review criteria when considering all of an Applicant's responses to this RFQ. Depending upon the volume of responses, and in the Authority's sole discretion, it may conduct subsequent interviews, as needed, prior to making a final selection.
- 7.2. An Applicant will be considered qualified provided the Applicant can perform the following tasks below (further provided funding becomes available, and subject to further details as set forth in subsequent written contract(s), as needed):
 - 7.2.1. Identify opportunities for Resilience Infrastructure projects, as defined in Section 2.2, and actions that directly mitigate current and anticipated climate impacts.
 - 7.2.2. Meet regularly to plan for, shape, and discuss Resilience Infrastructure project development and funding opportunities, to include any proposal status updates.
 - 7.2.3. Secure proprietary, legal access to privately owned or public property for purposes of

implementing Resilient Infrastructure projects including, where applicable, post-construction and long-term management terms of access for the duration of the grant period.

- 7.2.4. Actively coordinate with public agency landowners regarding the use of agency land for Resilient Infrastructure projects, where applicable.
- 7.2.5. Prepare schematic project designs of proposed Resilience Infrastructure including, but not limited to, flood barriers, shoreline protection, nature-based ecosystem resilience, green spaces, and stormwater infrastructure.
- 7.2.6. Prepare fixed price proposals, including design, insurance, financial assurances management, overhead, and stewardship costs, for the implementation of Resilience Infrastructure projects.
- 7.2.7. Develop a strategy and cost for ensuring the long-term stewardship of the Resilience Infrastructure project site and its ecological/community values, where applicable.
- 7.2.8. Actively coordinate with regulators, government officials, communities, and other stakeholders who have important roles in obtaining permits for Resilience Infrastructure projects, where applicable.
- 7.2.9. Assist the Authority in the writing, editing, and development of necessary content for future grant proposals, where applicable.
- 7.2.10. Implement funded Resilience Infrastructure projects on a fixed price, full delivery basis assuming all project-based risk and financial liability, where applicable.
- 7.2.11. Maintain financial capacity to assume all project-based costs and work under “pay for performance” models, as required.
- 7.2.12. Complete final construction and permit drawings that reflect the primary goals, objectives, and metrics of the submitted and funded proposal, where applicable. Construction of Resilience Infrastructure projects need not be performed by Applicants to this RFQ.
- 7.2.13. Secure all required permits and entitlements needed to authorize construction, where

applicable.

- 7.2.14. Complete the project using available funds while staying under the approved budget.
- 7.2.15. Furnish all required expertise, services, and materials needed to successfully implement the Resilience Infrastructure project.
- 7.2.16. Oversee and complete the Resilience Infrastructure project including any required close-out activities in coordination with assigned Authority staff.
- 7.2.17. Complete any required permits, secure final Resilience Infrastructure project sign-offs from applicable regulatory agencies, and prepare and submit performance reports to regulatory agencies or Authority staff for review and submission, where applicable.

8. Qualifications and Evaluation Criteria

8.1. Applicants must have the following qualifications:

- 8.1.1. Specialized experience and professional competence, to include all personnel (including sub-contractors) in connection with the type of services required and the complexity of the Resilience Infrastructure project.
- 8.1.2. Demonstrated experience and expertise in the design, engineering, fundraising, financing, permitting, implementation, maintenance, monitoring, and long-term management of Resilient Infrastructure projects.
- 8.1.3. Demonstrated experience in fully delivering nature-based solutions to flooding, shoreline protection, and nature-based ecosystem Resilience Infrastructure projects on public and private lands.
- 8.1.4. Provide proof of adequate insurance, assets, and/or bonding to pursue multiple projects of the type described above.
- 8.1.5. Demonstrated experience successfully executing large-scale full-delivery Resilience Infrastructure projects involving state and federal funding, including the Department of Natural Resources, Department of Environmental Protection, Department of Commerce,

Department of Interior, Department of Defense, Department of Transportation, and Department of Energy.

- 8.1.6. Ability to accept payment on a reimbursement basis with financial flexibility to handle unpredictable timing of grant payments.
- 8.1.7. Avoidance of personnel and/or organization conflicts of interest prohibited under Federal, State, or Local law.

9. Submission Requirements

- 9.1. Applicants must include the following in their response:
 - 9.1.1. A narrative describing the qualifications of your firm or team based on the qualifications set forth in Section 7 above, and responding to the evaluation criteria listed in Section 8 above.
 - 9.1.2. Examples of similar past projects discussed in Section 8.1.2.
 - 9.1.3. Resumes of key team members and firm profiles.
 - 9.1.4. Explicit disclosure of any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest (as set forth in Section 11 below).

10. Equal Opportunity

- 10.1. The Authority will not discriminate with regard to race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, marital status, age, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law.
- 10.2. Minority Business Enterprise/Woman Business Enterprise (MBE/WBE) goals are established by individual grant and funding opportunities, and the Authority pledges to comply with these requirements, as applicable.
- 10.3. The Authority reserves the right to select, from among a pool of qualified proposals, the Applicant that best compliments, and provides the opportunity for the Authority to further its mission and the

goals of implementing Resilience Infrastructure projects/opportunities.

11. Conflict of Interest

- 11.1. It is not uncommon for firms and their leadership in this region to have personal or professional relationships with entities that may create an actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest. The majority of such conflicts can be easily dealt with through proactive disclosure.
- 11.2. The Authority takes seriously its role to avoid actual, potential, and perceived conflicts of interest. The Applicant should disclose any such conflicts, in writing, when submitting their proposals in accordance with Section 9.1.4. of this RFQ. The Reviewers will consider the nature and degree of the Applicant's responsibilities with regard to the potential conflict when deciding the appropriate course of action, if any, that may be required to remedy the conflict.

12. Limitations

- 12.1. The Authority reserves the right to select the Applicant of its choosing, to reject all responses, or to terminate this RFQ at any time. The Authority may issue a new request, extend the deadline, or make other good-faith efforts to expand the applicant pool, as may be needed to effectuate the Authority's purposes.
- 12.2. The Authority reserves the right to choose another procurement vehicle for subsequent project phases in order to adhere to the rules required by the grantor. In the event that the selected Applicant fails to perform adequately during a grant application under contract, the Authority may disqualify the selected Applicant from the current RFQ qualification period and may choose another procurement vehicle for subsequent project phases.
- 12.3. In the event a selected Applicant is disqualified due to performance, the selected Applicant is eligible to apply during the subsequent annual renewal period.
- 12.4. Neither this RFQ, nor any proposals provided in response, constitute a contract between the Authority and the Applicant. An Applicant deemed qualification by the Authority (a "Qualified Applicant") does not guarantee that the Authority and the Qualified Applicant (the "Parties") will successfully execute a contract, and the final scope of any contract that may be executed by the Parties (to include fees) may vary.

- 12.5. Qualified Applicants will remain eligible for up to five (5) years from the date of qualification, pending the successful annual review of performance and eligibility by the Reviewers.
- 12.6. Qualified Applicants may be asked to submit fixed-price bids and designs for any Resilience Infrastructure projects the Authority deems beneficial to have multiple bids.
- 12.7. Qualified Applicants who continue to successfully qualify for annual renewal will be provided a letter from the Authority confirming their eligibility and shall not reapply to the annual RFQ. However, notwithstanding the preceding, a Qualified Applicant will need to reapply for the annual RFQ after five (5) consecutive successful renewals.
- 12.8. All documents created or used for the Authority's selection process with regard to this RFQ are considered drafts, pre-decisional internal materials, and all such internal materials will not be made available.

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