

**SOLICITATION OF REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
FOR PROFESSIONAL MARKETING STRATEGIES**

RFP #: 2009-M

INTENT AND GENERAL INFORMATION

The Columbia County Industrial Development Authority (CCIDA) is soliciting proposals from consultancies, firms, and collaboratives with proven competencies in economic development and utilization of economic and industry data within the State of Florida. The Project, titled "Go-to-market Columbia County" (hereafter "Project"), is required to ensure public and private sector leaders and stakeholders have: confidence in the purpose, capacity, and value of primary highway interchange sites, the airport and a proposed inland port in Columbia County; consensus on the most suitable recruitment of business and industry relative those sites; marketing strategies built around sites with success in mind; a comprehensive portfolio of site products; and an ever improving unity of purpose and service across the entire civic infrastructure of the community in order to improve the competitiveness of Columbia County with Florida and the neighboring state of Georgia.

The CCIDA expects that interested consultancies, firms, and collaboratives will make every effort to assemble a team with the requisite expertise and qualifications to perform required services.

DEADLINE for receipt of submittals or alternate submittals in response to this Request is May 27, 2009 at 3:00 p.m. Proposals should be mailed or hand delivered to CCIDA 162 South Marion Ave., Lake City, FL 32025. Submissions by fax or other electronic media will not be accepted under any circumstances. Late submissions will not be accepted, but will be returned unopened to the sender at the sender's expense.

Please direct any questions concerning this RFP to the CCIDA Executive Director, Jim Poole, at 386-752-3690.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

The managing authority for this solicitation shall be the Columbia County Industrial Development Authority.

The CCIDA reserves the right to accept or reject any and/or all submissions, to approve or reject any sub-consultants, and to waive any technicalities or informalities, as determined to be in the best interest of CCIDA.

The Contract for CCIDA consultancies, firms, and collaboratives will be for up to six months.

The points below are intended to provide a project framework and not intended to hamper the creativity of or preferred course of action produced by the Consultant. The Consultant is encouraged to formulate and propose concepts, strategies and other tools to effectively communicate the CCIDA's marketing strategy. The scope of services should include:

- An analysis of existing conditions, needs and assets of all five highway interchange sites, the airport and a proposed inland port site, located on Hwy 90 East. This information will establish a complete picture of what the economic condition of the community is now, will establish “where we are,” “what we have available,” and “what we need” to support the future expansion of business.
- An economic base analysis – focusing on the existing business and industry makeup to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the local economy. The plan should identify and recommend specific target industries such as distribution, bio-tech, retail, etc. that are optimally suited to locate at all five highway interchanges, the airport and the proposed inland port.
- An action plan for implementation of the overall economic development plan. The action plan will have two primary components:
 1. Address the physical needs needed to support economic development. The plan should identify costs associated with improving any resources needed to support industrial growth.
 2. Development of a marketing strategy based on the above, aimed at effectively reaching and influencing, and attracting the target industries that have been identified as best suited for our community.
- Comprehensive milestones of the project
- An analysis of emerging economic development trends occurring in the southeast and in Florida to include workforce readiness, training and education resources.

SCOPE OF PLAN AND GOALS:

The respondent will develop a proposal for a comprehensive economic development plan for the Columbia County IDA. The plan should be action based, and is expected to have a focus on implementation.

OBJECTIVES OF PLAN:

The CCIDAs objective is to develop a comprehensive economic development marketing strategic and portfolio that will result in the following:

- An assessment of the existing local economy/economic environment;
- An assessment of available resources (land, infrastructure, employees, etc.);
- Identification of specific economic sectors to attract based on a analysis;
- Development of specific recommendations to position the CCIDA to attract business and industry;
- Development of specific marketing strategies and promotional materials;

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Conformity and adherence to the terms and conditions of this solicitation shall be a condition considered by CCIDA as part of its review process.

In determining submission acceptance, any data submitted or related to the proposal, required or voluntary, shall be subject to evaluation as deemed appropriate and in the best interest of the CCIDA, including the conduct of the offeror or any representative of the offeror with regard to a CCIDA official or employee. Inaccurate and misleading information provided in an offeror's proposal may result in rejection of the proposal.

Submittals in response to this Solicitation will be reviewed against the criteria listed herein, and award of contract(s) shall be made in accordance with the Consultant Competitive Negotiation Act (CCNA), section 287.055, Florida Statute and applicable regulations of the State of Florida.

Submittals will be evaluated on the basis of submitted materials, references, and interviews as applicable.

A Certificate of Insurability acceptable to the County shall be provided before contract execution.

An original and nine (9) copies for a total of ten (10) of each submission must be received in a sealed envelope prominently marked on the outside with the words “**RFP # 2009-M Marketing Strategies**”.

Consultants Disclosures

Consultant must disclose any pending or threatened court actions and/or claims against the Consultant, parent company or subsidiaries. This information will not necessarily be cause for rejection of the proposal; however, withholding the information may be cause to reject the proposal and/or contract.

SUBMITTAL

Submittals should be concise, and must specifically address the issues of this RFP. It is requested that the response be titled RFP # 2009-M.

The submittals should include the following:

INFORMATION TO BE SUBMITTED IN PROPOSAL:

- Description and resume of the respondent, including brief history of the firm and resume(s) of specific employee(s) who will be part of the project team. Similar information shall be provided for any subcontractor(s), which would be retained by the respondent for this project.
- Name, office location, and description of the current work experiences of each team member to be assigned to the project - including a listing of specialized skills, technical competence, training, and familiarity with similar projects and any aspects thereof. Similar information should be submitted for all subcontractor(s). It will be important to demonstrate that the team identified has experience in completing specific tasks as identified in this RFP.
- Description of the last three completed projects which demonstrate the firm's current economic development planning experience and ability to complete projects of a similar size, scope, and purpose in a timely manner and any other completed projects (representative examples) of similar types of projects. Include address (es), telephone number(s), and the names of reference contacts for each project. Similar project descriptions should be submitted for all subcontractor(s). Please also submit one example of a completed plan that incorporates similar elements as requested in this RFP.
- A summary of 1000 words or less of the staging and timing of the project.
- A summary of 1000 words or less of the best approach to taking data integration and site review to a credible marketing agenda.
- A description of the firm(s) involvement with regional economic development partnerships.
- Provide a cost estimate to perform the specific tasks requested in the RFP.
- Proposed project time frame for completion of the plan.

- Statement as to the firm's availability and ability to meet the time frame established.

SELECTION AND EVALUATION PROCEDURES

The CCIDA will utilize a selection committee consisting of CCIDA staff, County staff, County elected official and business professionals who will review and rank all proposals received. The evaluation criteria listed below will be utilized to evaluate the consulting firms and the selection committee will narrow the final list to no more than three (3) consulting firms. The final three selected firms may be invited to give an oral presentation to the selection committee members. The committee members shall be the sole judge of its own best interest, the proposals and the resulting negotiated agreement. The committee's decision will be final.

Consulting firms will be evaluated using a number of factors including, but not limited to, the following:

1. Knowledge of emerging economic development trends occurring in the southeast and in Florida to include workforce readiness, training and education resources. (25 points)
2. Qualifications. Consulting firm and team will be evaluated on the basis of experience in performing similar projects. References will be used to assist in this evaluation. (15 points)
3. Value. Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of the approach that will position the CCIDA to obtain results and achieve the most success within the framework identified in the proposal – ultimately leading Columbia County to economic expansion. (15 points)
4. Understanding of project. Consulting firms, or teams, will be evaluated on the basis of how well the consultant communicates an understanding of the economic development plan project outlined in this RFP. (15 points)
5. Approach to project. Proposals will be evaluated on how the proposed project meets the objectives of the CCIDA. (10 points)
6. Quality of submittal (clarity, conciseness and compliance with the requirements in the Request for proposal). (10 points)

- 7. Ability to complete project in a timely manner. (5 points)
- 8. Location of key personnel –
Firms located within Florida. (5 points)

**SCORE SHEET – TO BE USED BY THE
SELECTION COMMITTEE
RFQ # 2009-L
RATING CRITERIA**

All proposals received in accordance with this Request for Proposals will be evaluated using the following worksheet.

	<u>Max Score</u>	<u>Rating</u>
1. Knowledge of emerging Economic development trends	<u>25</u>	_____
2. Qualification of firm & personnel	<u>15</u>	_____
3. Value	<u>15</u>	_____
4. Understanding of project	<u>15</u>	_____
5. Approach to project	<u>10</u>	_____
6. Quality of submittal	<u>10</u>	_____
7. Timely completion	<u>5</u>	_____
8. Firm's location	<u>5</u>	_____
	TOTAL SCORE	_____

SAMPLE SCORES:

- 0 Non-responsive – included no information on subject criteria
- 1 Poor
- 3 Fair
- 5 Average – included only minimum of what was asked for on subject criteria
- 7 Good
- 10. Excellent

Name of Consultant Being Scored: _____

