

**SOUTH BALTIMORE
GATEWAY PARTNERSHIP**



Request for Qualifications

**Design and Consulting
on
Wetland Design, Financing, and Budgeting
for
Pending Federal Grant Application**

Issue Date: 9-25-20

Submission Deadline: 5pm on 10-9-20

Email To: procurement@sbgpartnership.org

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1. Overview

Purpose

The purpose of this RFQ is to identify a firm or team to assist in the application for (and, if awarded, implementation of) a Federal grant to design and build natural resiliency features along the Middle Branch of the Patapsco River in Baltimore.

The South Baltimore Community Impact District Management Authority d/b/a South Baltimore Gateway Partnership (SBGP) is seeking firms or teams with expertise in the design, engineering, financing, permitting, and implementation of wetland construction, ecosystem restoration, shoreline resiliency, and hazard mitigation projects. The selected firm or team will assist with the completion of a federal grant and (if that grant is awarded) the implementation of the proposed project. This RFQ is not for construction services, which will be solicited separately if the grant is awarded.

Background

SBGP is an economic development authority working in the neighborhoods of South and Southwest Baltimore, funded by casino revenues (www.sbgpartnership.org). Along with the City of Baltimore, Parks & People Foundation, and other partners, SBGP has been spearheading the effort to reinvent the Middle Branch of the Patapsco River as Baltimore's next great waterfront, with 11 miles of parks and trails from Brooklyn to Port Covington. Working with communities around the waterfront, SBGP and its partners are currently creating a Middle Branch Waterfront Plan, which will lead to the creation of a large parks district with major environmental restoration, resiliency, and economic development outcomes.

In an effort to secure implementation dollars, SBGP recently submitted a Notice of Interest for Federal hazard mitigation funds to pay for the construction of wetlands, living shorelines, and vegetated berms at two sites along the Middle Branch: the BGE Spring Gardens facility and Medstar Harbor Hospital. The Notice of Interest was for a program called Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC), operated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) (<https://www.fema.gov/grants/mitigation/building-resilient-infrastructure-communities>).

BRIC is a new grant program, operating on an unusually compressed timeframe that was not announced until August 24, 2020. The BRIC application procedure in Maryland involves a three-step process:

1. **Notice of Interest (NOI)** submitted to the Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) due August 31, 2020. SBGP submitted a NOI to MEMA, and on September 21, 2020 was given authorization to continue to the next step.
2. **Proposal** submitted to MEMA due November 20, 2020. MEMA will review all proposals and select projects to bundle as sub-applicants in MEMA's own application to FEMA.
3. **Final Selection** by FEMA, expected December 2021. FEMA will review all of the state-level applications and determine which applications / sub-applications to approve.

SBGP needs a team to assist with stage two of the application process, as well as to implement the final project if funds are ultimately awarded. Both elements will be executed through separate written agreements. Construction of the resiliency features need not be performed by respondents to this RFP.

2. Request for Qualifications

2.1 Enquiries

All enquiries related to this RFQ are to be directed, in writing, to Brad Rogers, Executive Director of Baltimore Gateway Partnership, at procurement@sbgpartnership.org. Information obtained from any other source is not official and should not be relied upon.

2.2 Closing Date

All submissions must be made electronically to procurement@sbgpartnership.org, in PDF or Microsoft Word format, by **5:00 PM on Friday, October 9, 2020**. Hard copies will not be accepted. Responses must include a cover page clearly marked with the name, address, phone number, and email of the respondent.

2.3 Late Responses

Late responses will not be accepted and will be returned to the responder with a letter of explanation.

2.4 Review and Selection

Qualifications will be reviewed by SBGP staff. The reviewer(s) will check responses against the criteria listed below. Responses not meeting the criteria will not be considered for review. Responses meeting the criteria may be contacted for subsequent interview(s) prior to final selection.

The goal of all SBGP contracting and procurement is to ensure the best use of public funds to serve the public good by fulfilling SBGP's mission while adhering to the highest standards of professional and ethical behavior. SBGP is committed to ensuring that all funds entrusted to the entity are appropriately allocated using fair, ethical, equitable, responsible, and transparent practices that demonstrate integrity.

These values guide all SBGP conduct and decision making related to procurements, bids/estimates for goods and services, agreements, contracts, and related forms of commitments.

2.5 Acceptance of Responses

This RFQ is not a binding agreement to purchase goods or services. Responses to an RFQ are assessed in light of the qualification review criteria. Depending upon the volume of responses, SBGP may develop a shortlist of responders for subsequent interviews prior to making a final selection.

3. Services

Qualified respondents will be expected to perform the following tasks, with the precise scope to be detailed in a subsequent written contract(s).

Application Phase (Through November 20, 2020):

- Prepare schematic designs of wetlands, living shorelines, vegetated berms, and other nature-based resiliency features that can be feasibly permitted and constructed.
- Develop a strategy for ensuring the long-term management and stewardship of the resiliency features.
- Develop a strategy for the safe implementation of sediment recycling through the possible incorporation of dredge material that may be available from the Maryland Port Administration (MPA) or other sources.
- Prepare preliminary pricing and budgeting for the resiliency features, along with other associated design costs, insurance costs, management costs, overhead costs, and stewardship costs.
- Coordinate with property owners regarding the possible use of their land to avoid conflicts.
- Coordinate with regulators and government officials, including the City of Baltimore.
- Coordinate with members of the Middle Branch Waterfront Plan team and community representatives.
- Assist in the writing, editing, and development of necessary content for the grant proposal.

If Funds Are Awarded:

- Complete final construction and permit drawings for the resiliency features, incorporating principles embedded in the to-be-developed Middle Branch Waterfront Plan.
- Complete the final budget, limited to the available funds.
- Secure permits from all necessary regulatory agencies.
- Oversee the selection of contractors capable of installing the resiliency features.
- Coordinate with SBGP and community partners to identify opportunities for local participation, including the possibility of purchasing plant materials from community-based vendors.
- Oversee the installation of the resiliency features.
- Oversee the stewardship and maintenance of the resiliency features for a to-be-determined period of time.
- Comply with all Federal requirements imposed by the grant award.

4. Qualifications and Evaluation Criteria

The ideal firm or team will have the following qualifications:

- Demonstrated experience in the design, permitting, budgeting, implementation, and stewardship of resiliency features, with particular emphasis on nature-based solutions within an urban context.
- Demonstrated experience in sediment recycling and the incorporation of dredge material into resiliency features.
- Demonstrated experience working with communities of color and low-income communities.
- Proven capacity to deliver projects on time and on budget.
- Experience with Federal projects and/or funding sources.
- Specific expertise with, or direct participation in, the Middle Branch Waterfront Plan or other related efforts within the District.

Because SBGP does not anticipate that SBGP’s local impact grant funds will be used under this RFQ, no Baltimore City MBE/WBE procurement goals will apply to this project. However, despite the absence of a legal obligation, SBGP prefers teams that incorporate qualified minority-owned and women-owned firms. SBGP also prefers teams that incorporate other Impact Investment, including but not limited to local businesses with a strong nexus in the project area or Greater Baltimore, social enterprises, nonprofits, small businesses, and DBEs.

SBGP is aware that the services desired during the application phase will likely come at a cost. However, SBGP will provide extra attention to any respondents that are willing to work on spec during the application phase in anticipation of receiving payment during the implementation phase.

5. Submission Requirements

Please include:

- A. A narrative describing the qualifications of your firm or team, responding specifically to the evaluation criteria listed above.
- B. Examples of similar past projects.
- C. Resumes of key team members and firm profiles.
- D. Approximate anticipated cost for the work to be performed in the application stage (note: exact scope and price to be mutually agreed upon after selection).
- E. A disclosure of any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest (see below).

6. Equal Opportunity

SBGP will not discriminate in its procurement with regard to race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, marital status, age, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law.

SBGP does reserve the right to select, from among a pool of qualified proposals, the one that best provides an opportunity to further its mission through Impact Investment.

7. MBE/WBE Goals

The following statutorily required MBE/WBE goals currently apply to this project:

NONE

As mentioned above, because SBGP does not anticipate that SBGP's local impact grant funds will be used under this RFQ, no Baltimore City MBE/WBE procurement goals will apply to this project. However, despite the absence of a legal obligation, SBGP prefers teams that incorporate qualified minority-owned and women-owned firms.

8. Conflict of Interest

SBGP is a public body operating within a tightly defined geographic boundary, with a large board of directors and a wide range of project partners across the private, public, and non-profit sectors. As a result, it is common for participants in one SBGP project to overlap with, or have personal or professional relationships with, participants in another SBGP project. While this is generally a benefit to the communities involved, it introduces the possibility of conflicts of interest.

SBGP takes seriously its role to avoid actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest. The respondent should disclose any such conflicts of interest, in writing. The reviewer(s) will consider the nature of the respondent's responsibilities and the degree of potential or apparent conflict in deciding the course of action that the respondent needs to take to remedy the conflict of interest.

9. Limitations

SBGP reserves the right to select the respondent of its choosing, to reject all responses, or to terminate this request at any time. SBGP may issue a new request, extend the deadline, or make other good faith efforts to expand the applicant pool if the market for goods or services is limited. In the event that the selected firm or team fails to perform adequately during the application phase, or that grantor rules require it, SBGP reserves the right to select a new firm or team for the implementation phase.

Neither this request, nor any proposals provided in response to it, constitute a contract between SBGP and the applicant(s). Selection by SBGP does not guarantee that the parties will successfully negotiate or execute a contract, and final scope or contract details may vary from the description contained herein.

Applicants who are not successful may request a meeting to debrief about the selection process. SBGP documents created or used during the selection process, including any score cards, notes, emails, memos, or other written materials, are internal materials and will not be made available.

Late proposals, or proposals that are not fully responsive to the requirements listed herein, will be disqualified.