



## REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Name of RFP:

**Database Design (Web-based) and Information Technology Services**

Agency:

**Allegheny County Economic Development**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to solicit proposals from qualified service providers for Database Design (Web-based) and Information Technology Services to establish an integrated database system for the Allegheny County Department of Economic Development (ACED).

ACED is seeking proposals for the establishment of a database to manage its projects. The database developed needs to be Web-based, innovative, user-friendly, facilitate comprehensive project reporting and support transactional applications.

### **Background**

#### **Mission of the Department**

Allegheny County Economic Development (ACED) manages economic and residential development for the County, a dynamic, multifaceted mission that includes these objectives:

- Attract new business to the County.
- Help businesses and institutions already here expand, modernize and create jobs.
- Acquire and assemble sites for development and redevelopment.
- Assure that minority, woman-owned, and disadvantaged businesses participate fully in the County's growth.
- Help residents, developers and nonprofit agencies increase the stability of the County's residential neighborhoods.
- Support homeowners in the acquisition and renovation of their dwellings.
- Improve the County's housing stock.
- Ensure the vitality of neighborhood business districts.
- Aid the County's municipalities in updating infrastructure, including sewer and water systems, highways and recreation amenities.
- Provide leadership for special projects, such as the community's response to natural disasters.

- Monitor and report on the compliance status of all projects and programs with Federal or State support.

We achieve progress on all these fronts by coordinating success, that is, by serving as the catalyst for public-private-neighborhood partnerships that provide greater expertise and participation than any one organization could generate by itself.

Two of our most important partners are the Federal government and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. In addition, we team with private businesses, developers and contractors; the philanthropic community, and vital nonprofit and community-based agencies.

For more information about ACED and its programs, visit ACED's Web site at <http://economic.alleghenycounty.us/>

To assure that all these needs are met ACED has crafted and refined an organizational structure that allows personnel to develop specialties yet work seamlessly with specialists in other areas.

Our eight Divisions include:

- **Authorities.** Six authorities, each with a special focus such as assisting the growth of health care or higher education institutions, comprise this Division. Because of their structure and specific purposes, the authorities can move nimbly and effectively.
- **Business Development.** Attracting businesses to the County — and helping them grow and create jobs — are the Division's top objectives. It achieves these goals through a compelling variety of financing programs that often serve as a conduit for Federal and State funding.
- **Development.** Major development projects are the purview of this Division, which coordinates property acquisition, site development and redevelopment, and infrastructure development. This expertise is especially critical in the recycling of brownfields, an ACED emphasis.
- **Housing & Human Services.** Through its Housing Development and Consumer Services sections, this Division strives to improve the County's housing stock and strengthen its residential neighborhoods. Its chief vehicles are financing programs for individual homeowners, for developers and contractors, and for nonprofit human services agencies.
- **Municipal.** This Division works to improve the quality of life for County residents by helping municipalities upgrade their infrastructure and recreational amenities. It also promotes intergovernmental cooperation by working with and through the 8 Councils of Governments (COGs).
- **Operations.** As our administrative Division, Operations manages and monitors grant applications and disbursements. It also monitors and reports on the

compliance status of all federal grant programs. The computer operations and database will be overseen by this division.

- **Planning**. The Planning Division acts as the County's Official Planning Agency and administers duties assigned under the PA Municipalities Planning Code. Highlights are overseeing land development approvals for 29 municipalities, and providing reviews of land developments, ordinances and plans for the remaining 100 municipalities with their own ordinances.
- **Special Projects and Finance**. This Division focuses on securing funding for major real estate and business development projects — and it administers the financing it acquires. Among its responsibilities is overseeing use of Tax Increment Financing, one of the County's most important development tools.

### Scope

ACED has identified the following primary goals and objectives for the establishment of a Department-wide database system:

- a. Data must be part of an integrated system that is up-to-date and connects the work of General Project Management, Accounting, Business Finance, Business Services, Loan Servicing and Collections.
- b. The system must be able to maintain a transactional history of events (e.g. generate reports as of a specific date, record changes to data, track amendments to contracts, reports, etc.)
- c. The system needs to be Web-based, accessible and user-friendly both to internal users and external users.
- d. Common terminology must be adopted and used throughout the Department (e.g. a "project" means the set of activities a sub-recipient / business has pledged to perform (# housing units, # linear feet of sewer line, job creation) as a condition of receiving ACED funding.
- e. The system must be able to track a project through the stages of involvement with ACED (e.g. from application and award stage to contracting and closeout).
- f. Businesses, municipalities, councils of governments, housing developer, human service agencies must be offered the convenience of filing required ACED documents online (e.g. application, semi-annual reports).
- g. The system must permit the attachment and retention of documents associated with a project (e.g. ACED Project Summary, records for purposes of the End of Year Report or job creation/retention lists needed to determine eligibility during the application phase, contracts).
- h. To respond to internal and external demand for information about projects, the system must have expansive search/query capabilities (e.g., by location, by business, by fiscal year, by program).
- i. Users need to have a system that allows them to choose the variables they want

- and generate on demand customized reports from the system.
- j. Search results must be able to be exported to Excel (or similar) to easily permit the manipulation of data.
  - k. The proposed system must preserve existing data and export it to the new system.
  - l. Public records in the database system must be readily accessible to the public through the Web.
  - m. The system must have the ability to separate and protect confidential information.
  - n. Recurring reports, forms, summaries, contracts, letters and similar documents that use project data must be able to be easily generated from the system.
  - o. Must comply with IT standards established by Allegheny County Division of Computer Services for the current operational standards for information technology devices and services established by the Department of Administrative Services.
  - p. *Provide Training*
    - a. Develop training documentation such as training summary guides, software manuals and help documentation;
    - b. Provide at least one day of training services; and
    - c. Provide support following the production implementation of the system up to one year after the contract start date.

### **Deliverables**

- 1. Meetings
  - 2. Bi-weekly progress reports
  - 3. Database design and systems requirements report, due monthly, including:
    - the informational needs of each division
    - the informational needs of ACED as a whole
    - an analysis of the potentials and limitations of the systems currently in use, including the databases and reports completed by current staff
    - feasibility of integration of databases with new data systems, in order to reduce redundant data collection
      - costs and benefits of reducing/creating redundant data entry
    - database functionality: what questions and reporting requirements will the database be designed to address?
    - hardware and software requirements and related costs
- description of the system and users' access to the database  
costs for programming and installation

## **Anticipated Proposal Timeline**

|                       |                                                   |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| <b>March 12, 2010</b> | RFP Issued                                        |
| <b>April 12, 2010</b> | RFP Due Date                                      |
| <b>April 22, 2010</b> | Consultant Interviews                             |
| <b>April 26, 2010</b> | Consultant Interviews (round 2, if necessary)     |
| <b>April 30, 2010</b> | Notification of Selection of Preferred Consultant |
| <b>May 10, 2010</b>   | Begin Project                                     |

## **Resources**

ACED will provide:

- Liaison person(s) for the project
- Access to administrators and program staff
- Any pertinent database development work performed by prior vendors

## **Selection Criteria**

Criteria for selection will include, but not limited to:

- Understanding of requirements
- Methodology for design and development
- Proposed solutions
- Work plan and schedule
- Background & prior experience (lead and project team)
- Cost
- Financial solvency
- M/W/DBE Participation

## **Proposals should also include the following:**

1. Plan of action including roles of contractor, and other stakeholders, to include proposed activities, work plan, deliverables, estimated time table and personnel involved
2. Relevant staff expertise/experience by means of curriculum vitae or staff resumes; 2-page maximum for each of the professional personnel
3. Organizational structure that specifies which staff member will be responsible for specific duties or responsibilities of the database development project
4. Job descriptions (if contractor will be hiring new staff)
5. Listing and contact information of at least two former clients for whom the vendor has provided services similar to those described in this RFP
6. At least two samples of relevant prior work, which may be submitted electronically in the form of a working database composed of sample data

7. Evidence of financial solvency, which may be submitted in the form of financial statements for the last two years
8. Itemized budget (phases, personnel, supplies/equipments, travel), including your payment terms:
  - Provide details regarding work hours, overtime, or any other factor that will affect how services or hours are accrued and billed
9. There is no expressed or implied obligation to reimburse responding firms for any expenses incurred in responding to this request for proposals and ACED will not do so. By submitting a proposal, interested firms and individuals will be granting ACED the right to request additional information or clarifications from proposers, or to allow corrections of errors or omissions, and to direct inquiries to clients of the proposers and others who may be able to aid in the evaluation of a proposer's capabilities.
10. ACED reserves the right to retain all proposals submitted and to use any ideas in a proposal regardless of whether that proposal is selected. Submission of a proposal indicates acceptance by the firm of the conditions contained in the request for proposals.

#### **Minority and Women's Business Enterprise Participation:**

The Allegheny County Minority/ Women and Disadvantaged Business Program (MBE/WBE/DBE) has established in connection with this contract, the goals of (13%) of the original amount for the utilization of MBEs and (2%) of the original contract amount for the utilization of WBEs. These goals remain in effect throughout the life of the contract. When the County awards the contract with less participation than the contract goals, good faith efforts should continue throughout the life of the contract to increase the M/W/DBE participation to meet the contract goals. A list of PA certified M/W/DBE firms can be found on the internet at <http://www.paucp.com>.

#### **Proposal Format:**

Your proposal should be 12-point type size or greater, and single-spaced. All margins should be 1 inch. Your proposal should not exceed 5 pages, excluding supporting documents (such as staff profiles, references and evidence of financial solvency). Please submit three (3) copies to the address specified at the end of this RFP.

#### **Other Information**

The ACED project liaison will be consulted as key decisions arise and will be kept apprised of the progress of the study and of findings at least monthly and notified of significant events or decision points as they emerge.

All data, data collection instruments and protocols, computer programs, data documentation and findings will be the sole property of ACED. Data and documentation will be thoroughly cleaned and will be turned over to ACED in the form agreed upon for each project. All data must be accompanied with all documentation necessary for ACED

to validate or replicate any analyses conducted in the course of the project. This includes a complete data dictionary, all variable descriptors, data collection instruments, code for creation of any composite variables or data reduction, and any users' notes. All data-related items will be submitted in both hard copy and electronic formats unless otherwise agreed upon.

Contact Information

*Inquiries should be directed to:*

Donna R. Joyce, Manager of Operations  
Allegheny County Economic Development  
425 Sixth Avenue, Suite 800  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219  
Ph. 412.350.1007  
Fax: 412.642.2217  
e-mail: [donna.joyce@AlleghenyCounty.us](mailto:donna.joyce@AlleghenyCounty.us)

**Three copies of the proposal must be received by Allegheny County by Monday, April 12, 2010 at 3:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time.** All copies of the proposals must be under sealed cover and plainly marked. Proposals shall be delivered or mailed to:

Allegheny County Economic Development  
attn: Donna Joyce, Manager of Operations  
425 Sixth Avenue, Suite 800  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Ph. 412.350.1007  
Fax: 412.642.2217  
e-mail: [donna.joyce@AlleghenyCounty.us](mailto:donna.joyce@AlleghenyCounty.us)