



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)
RETAIL MARKET ANALYSIS & RECRUITMENT PLAN FOR ESSEX
June 7, 2023

Overview

The Chesapeake Gateway Chamber of Commerce (CGCC), with the support of the Baltimore County Department of Planning, is issuing this Request for Proposals (RFP) to identify qualified consulting teams specializing in developing and conducting community retail gap analyses and retailer recruitment strategies for the preparation of an in-depth Retail Market Analysis and Recruitment/Retention Plan for Eastern Boulevard in Essex, Maryland.

CGCC is seeking a consultant/firm to prepare and conduct a community-centric retail analysis measuring the retail market and its sales, competition, leakage, gaps and consumer preferences. The consultant shall prepare an original report detailing and analyzing the data collected and identifying the types of businesses that are most viable along Eastern Boulevard in Essex. The report shall include specific retail recruitment goals, strategies and implementation measures based on the analysis performed. In addition, the report shall contain a plan for business recruitment and retention outlining top priority projects, their timing, anticipated cost and proposed funding sources for each item/activity.

Background

CGCC's mission is to promote an economic environment which attracts new businesses to the area while allowing established businesses to prosper. The organization is dedicated to enhancing quality of life in the Eastern Baltimore County region by reinvesting its resources in all phases of community life. With the support of the Baltimore County Government, CGCC is driving revitalization efforts in Essex through the leadership of the TAP Implementation Steering Committee and Essex Development Initiative. Our primary focus is on retaining and marketing current businesses and attracting new businesses to Essex, while also addressing quality of life issues such as public safety, traffic calming, beautification, and community engagement to improve conditions for businesses, customers and community members alike.

Over the past several decades, numerous studies have been conducted analyzing issues and informing planning and implementation of initiatives to drive economic growth in Essex. The purpose of conducting a retail market analysis and creating a recruitment and retention plan in the summer/fall of 2023 is to build on and supplement the work that has already been done. CGCC expects that consultants submitting proposals will have reviewed and carefully considered the following documents* in their proposal planning and research process:

- 2030 Baltimore County Master Plan
- 2022 Essex-Eastern Boulevard Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) Report completed by the Urban Land Institute

- 2021 Baltimore County Department of Planning Design Guidelines for Essex
- 2021 Essex Commercial Revitalization District Map
- 2020 Essex Sustainable Community Map
- 2018 Baltimore County Sustainable Community Action Plan for Essex
- 2018 Essex Market Study Summary
- 2006 Gateway to the Water: A Vision for the Future of Essex-Middle River completed by the Urban Design Assistance Team (UDAT)
- 1996 Eastern Baltimore County Revitalization Study
- 1991 Essex Commercial Business District Revitalization Strategy
- Documentation from all Essex TAP Implementation Steering Committee Meetings including Agendas, Minutes and supplemental materials.

*[*Documents can be accessed on the Chesapeake Gateway Chamber of Commerce website at www.chesapeakechamber.org]*

The primary area of focus for data collection, analysis and business retention and recruitment for this project is Eastern Boulevard between Back River Bridge and MaryIn Avenue. However, it should be noted that there are several commercial corridors in Essex either surrounding, or in close proximity to, Eastern Boulevard which may warrant some consideration when preparing the RFP. These areas include:

- **Mace Avenue** from Eastern Boulevard to Rossville Boulevard
- **MaryIn Avenue** from Eastern Boulevard to Sandalwood Road
- **Eastern Boulevard** from Marlyn Avenue to 702 (specifically Middlesex Shopping Center)
- **Eastern Boulevard** from 702 to Lockheed Martin
- **Stemmer's Run Road** from Rossville Boulevard to Old Eastern Avenue
- **Back River Neck Road** from Old Eastern Avenue to Turkey Point Road
- **Essex Waterfront** from Back River Bridge to Middle River

Scope of Work

CGCC is seeking a retail market analysis and recruitment/retention plan that will inform current and future retail needs to ensure economic growth within the Essex Commercial Revitalization District, with a special focus on Eastern Boulevard between Back River Bridge and Marlyn Avenue. The first section of the project will involve data collection, a review and an analysis of the retail trade area, and the second section will provide an informed recruitment and retention strategy to be used to keep businesses in and attract new businesses to Essex.

- 1) Retail Market Analysis
 - Stakeholder involvement (i.e. - business owners, local and regional economic development professionals, city officials, etc.)
 - Existing conditions assessment
 - Customer profiles and consumer preferences
 - Market and gap analysis
 - Review government policies/programs (Department of Planning, Department of Economic and Workforce Development)
 - Review nonprofit and other business support programs
 - Define retail trade area.
- 2) Recruitment and Retention Plan
 - Identify vulnerable businesses currently existing in Essex
 - Recommend programs and resources needed to support current businesses

- Recommend viable retail prospects
- Identity potential growth and redevelopment sites
- Provide recruitment strategy to include programs, resources and funding (amounts and sources) to entice new businesses to Essex

Proposed Project Timeline

Activity	Anticipated Date
RFP issued	Wednesday, June 7, 2023
RFP Interest Zoom Call	Thursday, June 15, 2023 at 10:00 am
Deadline for proposal submission	Tuesday, June 27, 2023
Consultant teams selected for interviews	Monday, July 3, 2023
Interviews conducted	Wednesday, July 12 – Wednesday, July 26, 2023
Consultant team agreement executed	Friday, August 11, 2023
Study begins	Monday, August 28, 2023
Study ends	Friday, October 27, 2023
Receive Market Analysis Report & Retention Plan	Wednesday, November 15, 2023

Proposal Requirements

Consultants/firms interested in providing these services must prepare and submit a Proposal that includes:

- Cover Letter:** Provide an overview of the project in a letter that is signed by the consultant/an officer of the firm authorized to execute a contract with CGCC.
- Consultant Qualifications:** Describe the areas of expertise of current staff and the scope of services that can be provided without the services of an outside consultant under the consultant's/firm's direction.
- Key Personnel:** Include a proposed project management structure. Identify the key contact for the project and all personnel who will be assigned to work on it along with a description of their abilities, qualifications, and experience. Include resumes for all key individuals. There can be no change of key personnel once the proposal is submitted without the prior approval of CGCC.
- Subcontractors:** Identify any portion of the scope of work that will be subcontracted. Include consultant/firm qualifications (brief) and key personnel, telephone number and contact names for all subcontractors.
- Project Workplan:** Provide a description of project understanding (brief), detailed work approach and methodology. The workplan should list specific tasks and any specific considerations, options, or alternatives.
- Project Schedule:** Taking into consideration the Timeline section of this RFP, propose a timeline for completion of the Retail Market Analysis and Recruitment Plan including start date, milestones and target completion date. Any assumptions regarding turnaround time for review by CGCC staff or TAP Implementation Steering Committee members should be clearly noted.
- Fee Information:** Provide a detailed fee proposal including hourly rate schedule and estimated number of hours to complete all components of the study. Identify sub-tasks and the respective cost in your fee proposal as necessary. Hourly fees for additional or optional services that may be required shall also be included.
- References:** Provide a list of relevant projects completed by the consultant/firm under which services like those required by this RFP were performed. An emphasis should be placed on projects undertaken within the past three years and those projects undertaken for agencies

located in similar sized communities. Include a brief description of the project, dates the services were provided and contact information of references familiar with the services provided. The format below is provided as a model:

Project Title:		Date of Service:
Client	Scope of Work	Deliverables
Name:	-	-
Title:	-	-
Organization:	-	-
Phone:	-	-
Email:	-	-

- I. **Work Samples:** Provide brief descriptions of two projects dealing with retail analysis, redevelopment, recruitment, or similar topics prepared by or under the direction of the consultant/firm. Include in your description the techniques utilized in the analysis process and the outcome of the planning process.
- J. **Interview:** Consultant/firm staff may be requested to be available for an interview with CGCC staff either via Zoom or in-person in the office in Essex/Middle River as part of the final selection process. The lead members of the consulting team will be expected to attend any interviews scheduled with CGCC.

Requirements for Proposal Submission

Proposals are due on Tuesday, June 27, 2023, at 5:00 pm EST. Interested parties must submit two (2) bound copies of their submittals that include all information in the format outlined in this RFP. In addition, an electronic copy of the statements of interest and qualifications saved in PDF format should be provided on a flash drive. Hard copies of proposals must be submitted in a sealed package/envelope labeled "Request for Proposals: Essex Market Analysis & Recruitment Plan." Electronic versions not accompanied by hard copies of the documents will not be accepted.

Proposals shall be delivered to CGCC on or before:

Date: Tuesday, June 27, 2023
Time: 5:00 pm EST
To: Chrissy Erb
 Director, Essex Development Initiative
 Chesapeake Gateway Chamber of Commerce
 415 Williams Court, Suite 102
 Middle River, Maryland 21220

Proposal submissions should follow all instruction requirements listed above. The CGCC assumes no responsibility for the delivery of mail or courier services and is not responsible for the failure of bids to be received by 5:00 pm EST on Tuesday, June 27, 2023. The receipt date and time are absolute. Failure to comply will automatically render any submission non-responsive. Proposals received after the deadline will not be accepted. It is the consultant's responsibility to ensure that all documents are submitted to and received by CGCC in a timely manner.

RFP Interest Call

All consultants/firms interested in submitting proposals for this project are encouraged to participate in a Zoom call with Chrissy Erb, Director, Essex Development Initiative, on Wednesday, June 15, 2023 at 10:00 am. Please join the call by using the following link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88009096333?pwd=T0R3a21UVGRyV0I3SGxZRXBRTUp3UT09>

Meeting ID: 880 0909 6333

Passcode: 548827

Questions

Questions about the RFP process or the project are to be directed to:

Chrissy Erb, Director, Essex Development Initiative, Chesapeake Gateway Chamber of Commerce

Phone: (443) 579-7974

Email: chrissy.erb@chesapeakechamber.org.

Terms and Conditions

CGCC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals or portions thereof without stated cause. CGCC also may elect to reject all proposals and re-issue a new RFP.

CGCC reserves the right to obtain clarification of any point in a consultant's proposal or obtain additional information. Any request for clarification or other correspondence related to the RFP shall be in writing or email, and a response shall be provided within three (3) business days.

CGCC shall accept the proposal that demonstrates the best ability and most qualified to meet the needs listed in this RFP.