



ADA TOWNSHIP DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS DESIGN AND FACILITATION

OVERVIEW:

The Ada Township Downtown Development Authority (DDA) is requesting proposals from qualified consultants interested in designing and facilitating a strategic planning process for the Ada Downtown Development District. The DDA seeks to develop a strategic plan outlining a framework to move its initiatives forward over the next three – five years.

BACKGROUND:

Ada Township is a suburban community within the Grand Rapids metro area in West Michigan, located 11 miles east of downtown Grand Rapids. The Township's population is approximately 14,388. With approximately 300 households living within the Downtown Development Authority's development district.

The DDA was created in 2008 by Ada Township, and has the authority and capability to develop, finance, own and operate a variety of public improvements and programs intended to improve and enhance the DDA District. The Development District, which is included as Attachment A, is comprised of predominantly commercial and industrial-zoned lands along the Fulton Street (M-21) corridor within Ada Township boundaries, as well as the historic, traditional town center and adjacent neighborhood known as the Ada Village area. The DDA's work is directed by its Development Plan and Tax Increment Financing Plan, which identifies the public improvement projects the DDA proposes to undertake in the future, and the means by which those projects could be financed.

The Ada Township village area is an unincorporated, small, traditional business district and surrounding residential neighborhood, located at the confluence of the Grand and Thornapple Rivers. The village borders State Highway M-21, a major commuting route to the City of Grand Rapids to the west. Portions of the business district adjoining the highway corridor are suburban and auto-oriented in form and appearance, while the historic portion of the business district centered on the Thornapple River Dr./Ada Dr. intersection has small-scale, urban form. On the opposite side of M-21 from the village are the World Headquarters and manufacturing facilities of Amway Corp., with 2.9 million square feet of manufacturing, office and distribution space on 300 acres, with 2,000+ employees on the campus.

Previous Planning Efforts

In 2013, the Ada Township DDA, with assistance of a consultant team, conducted the Envision Ada planning process for the Ada Village area. With significant involvement from the public, a plan for redevelopment of major portions of the Village was developed. The Envision Ada Plan included recommended street system changes in the Village, areas for residential, commercial and mixed-use development in the Village, and public amenity improvements. This community vision led to the reconstruction of major throughfares in the downtown as well as a new River Front Park and Library/Community Center that are now both complete. Construction in the Village began in 2015, seeking to expand retail, residential and restaurant offerings while showcasing the community's natural resources and creating a more walkable community. The Ada Village area is now a mixture of the new redeveloped downtown, that came out of the Envision Ada plan, and the historic portion of the downtown. More information can be found at: <http://adamichigan.org/village>.

Additionally, Ada Township underwent a strategic planning process in 2018. The DDA Strategic Plan would be separate from the Ada Township plan, however, it will be important to maintain a strong connection between the two plans.

DESIRED STRATEGIC PLANNING OUTCOMES:

An integral part of the strategic planning process will be determining a community vision for the development district. The Scope of Work should clearly articulate the public participation process and use of these community resources. The following outcomes are identified to provide guidance to the responding firms regarding the Authority's expectations for this process. The selected firm will recommend detailed strategies to assist the DDA in achieving these goals. The DDA's estimated budget for consulting services described below is \$12,000. This estimated budget is not intended to represent a cap for the desired scope of work. The DDA will consider all proposals equally.

- Perform a S.W.O.T Analysis
- Identify a process and schedule for engaging key stakeholders in the development of the strategic plan, may include workshops, focus groups, etc. Among the stakeholders that should be engaged are, but not limited to, the following:
 - DDA and Township Board Members
 - DDA Development Area Citizens Council
 - Local Business Owners
 - Residents within the Development District
 - Representatives from local civic/faith communities
 - Ada Historical Society
 - Kent District Library
 - Ada Business Association
 - Other public/private partnerships
- Define an organizational mission and vision that aligns with the DDA's priorities and goals
- Identify what the business community expects from the DDA
- Focus on a limited number of achievable initiatives

- Identify what the DDA wants to accomplish over the next three – five years
- Identify both the positive and negative external forces that influence the local community
- Include use of web and social media to communicate with stakeholders and facilitate ongoing dialogue within the community regarding the development of the plan

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS:

Proposal Format and Content

At a minimum, each proposal submitted in response to this RFP shall include the following information:

- I. **Firm History-** Name and background of the firm, including corporate structure, years in business, services provided and number of employees. This information shall also be provided for subconsultants, if any, to be engaged.
- II. **Personnel-** Include resumes of key staff to be assigned to this project, their respective roles and approximate percent of time each would be involved in the project.
- III. **Relevant Experience-** Identify and describe the relevant experience of the consultant firm and any subconsultants that will be utilized in the development of the strategic plan. Provide at least two (2) sample projects with comparable scopes.
- IV. **Project Approach and Scope of Work-** Provide the technical approach recommended to accomplish the required work. Include tasks, methodologies, and a description of the client/stakeholder involvement in the process. The process required to create the Strategic Plan shall include an extensive effort to involve and inform the citizens, businesses, and interest groups in Ada Township of the planning initiative. Please include specific steps that will be taken to determine the community vision. The Scope of Work shall clearly identify any tasks that require participation or assistance from the Township/DDA.
- V. **References-** Provide a minimum of three (3) municipal references for similar projects performed within the past five (5) years.
- VI. **Project Schedule-** Provide a project timeline that includes key meetings, tasks and deliverables.
- VII. **Fees-** Provide a cost proposal, including hourly rate structure, must be submitted in a separate sealed envelope and clearly labeled “Cost Proposal”.

Submittal and Due Date

Five (5) copies of the proposal, not exceeding 20 pages, plus a PDF version on a flash drive, shall be submitted at the office of the Ada Township Downtown Development Authority, 7330 Thornapple River Dr. SE, PO Box 370, Ada, MI 49301 no later than September 20, at 5:00 p.m.

Proposals shall be submitted in a sealed envelope displaying the bidder's name and labelled: **Strategic Planning Process Bid.**

Proposals received after the date and time specified above will not be considered. No proposal may be withdrawn after opening for a period of thirty (30) days.

The 9-Member DDA Board or a Committee thereof will evaluate proposals received, conduct interviews with selected finalist and select the candidate with which to negotiate a contract for the project.

Anticipated Schedule

August 30, 2021	Distribution of RFP to selected firms
September 20, 2021	Proposals Due
September 21, 2021	Distribution of Proposals to Review Committee
September 22 – September 29, 2021	Review Committee to Select Short Listed Firms
October 11, 2021	DDA Board Approval of Candidates for Interviews
October 18 – October 22, 2021	Interviews Held with Short Listed Firms
November 8, 2021	DDA Board Meeting to Select Preferred Firm
November 9-November 12, 2021	Complete Contract Negotiations
December 13, 2021	Contract Approved by DDA Board

ALTERNATES OR ADDENDUMS:

Explanations desired by a prospective bidder shall be requested in writing to the Ada Township DDA, and if explanations are necessary, a reply shall be made in the form of an Addendum, a copy of which will be forwarded to each bidder. Every request for such explanation shall be in writing and addressed to:

Haley Stichman, DDA Director
Ada Township DDA
PO Box 370, Ada, MI 49301
hstichman@adatownshipmi.com

REJECTION OF BIDS:

The Ada Township DDA reserves the right to reject any or all bids, in part or in their entirety, or to waive any informality or defect in any bid, or to accept any bid which, in its opinion, is deemed most advantageous to the Ada Township DDA.

NON-DISCRIMINATION:

Ada Township's consultants shall not discriminate against an employee or applicant for employment with respect to hire, tenure, terms, conditions or privileges of employment, or a matter directly or indirectly related to employment, because of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, height, weight or marital status, or disability that is unrelated to the individual's ability to perform the duties of a particular job or position.

The vendor shall observe and comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws, ordinances, rules and regulations which shall be deemed to include, but not be limited to, the Elliot-Larsen Civil Rights Act and the Persons with Disabilities Civil Rights Act.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT:

Information submitted in this bid is subject to the Michigan Freedom of Information Act and may not be held in confidence after the bid is opened. The bid will be available for review after staff has evaluated it, or fifteen (15) business days after the opening date, whichever comes first.

WITHDRAWAL:

A bid may be withdrawn in person or by written request prior to the time specified for opening the bids.