



## Request for Proposals

*Economic Development Training, Marquette County Strategy Development, and Framework for Rural Counties*

### **Description**

The Central Upper Peninsula Planning and Development (CUPPAD) Regional Commission is seeking proposals for a package of services to assist to in the development of a region-wide economic recovery and resiliency strategy. The region includes the six counties of Alger, Dickinson, Delta, Marquette, Menominee, and Schoolcraft in Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

CUPPAD is in the process of developing a six-county regional economic recovery and resilience strategy which will become a component of CUPPAD's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs). To build this document, it is our expectation to support the creation of six individual county-based strategies, starting with our largest and most economically diverse: Marquette County. To support this initiative, CUPPAD is seeking a firm who would be capable of hosting a region-wide virtual kickoff event for the program, development of a Marquette County-focused economic recovery and resiliency strategy, and provide training and a template document which could support the five other counties as they set out in the development of their own county-focused strategies.

Proposals should demonstrate knowledge of the Central Upper Peninsula of Michigan, former experience working with regional partners, and demonstrated economic development expertise.

### **Background**

CUPPAD, a regional planning organization, is the U.S. EDA's designated Economic Development District for the central upper peninsula's six-county region. Through the EDA and via the CARES Act, CUPPAD has received Federal funding support for creating a regionwide economic recovery and resilience strategy as part of its CEDs. As required by the CARES Act, this strategy must include a focus on how the community will respond to economic injury as a result of coronavirus. CUPPAD is looking for a consultant partner to assist with components of our regional recovery strategy which will help jumpstart the process while creating a product for Marquette County that is relevant and practical from an implementation perspective.

### **Expectations**

The selected consultant will be responsible for creating the Marquette County recovery strategy which will serve as a proof of concept from which, following the consultant's portion of the project, the other five counties will follow in the development of their own strategies. The resulting collection of county plans and findings will be aggregated and summarized by CUPPAD on a regional scale and incorporated as a component of the region's CEDs.

To kick off the program, the consultant will work with CUPPAD and its partners to host a region-wide virtual event introducing county-based economic recovery and resiliency strategy planning for stakeholders in the full six-county region. As the Marquette strategy nears completion, those same stakeholder who attended the kickoff will be invited to attend a training program hosted by the consultant which will be designed to enhance their knowledge and capacities as they set out on their journey for developing their own county's strategy, while

using Marquette's Strategy as a reference. Following the training, the consultant will supply a template for each of the five counties to follow and the fundamental knowledge for working together to create their own documents, which CUPPAD and local partners will support post-project.

This is a work for hire project. All materials prepared by the contractor for this package of services will be the property of the funders.

### **Goals**

- Develop implementation strategies for responding to economic injury as a result of coronavirus
- Reliance on an ecosystem approach – strong collaboration with all partners in economic development and interrelated issues
- Consider opportunities posed by the Michigan Launch Initiative; exploring collaborations in education and research similar to Michigan's *University Research Corridor* and the possibility of creating an innovation district
- Growing the cybersecurity industry and related industries
- Planning for opportunity zones
- Supporting growth and expansion of manufacturing
- Attracting talent to our region's centers of commerce and culture
- Developing a sustainable and resilient regional food system that supports local value-added production
- Equitable growth in regional prosperity – mindfulness of the struggles of ALICE population, particularly amid the COVID-19 pandemic
- Developing public-private partnerships to help solve big problems that we consistently struggle with (housing, talent supply, infrastructure)
- Proactive and visionary planning for significant redevelopment opportunities
- Adapting to the decline of the mining industry – reskilling the workforce
- Creating a more entrepreneurial-minded community and connecting better with our Innovate Marquette SmartZone to cultivate new enterprises locally.

### **Deliverables**

- Hold a six-county region-wide kickoff event for economic recovery and resiliency planning with all key stakeholders from each county invited. (virtual, region-focused)
- Create an economic recovery plan for Marquette County that can be used as an example for the other five counties. Includes recommendations of a regional nature to be adopted by other counties. This document should be able to feed up to the strategy found in our CEDS. (Virtual and in-person, Marquette County-focused)
- Economic Development Recovery Strategy Training program (virtual, region-focused)
- Provide a template document that our regional team can use to work with our other five counties to develop their own individual strategies. (Editable document – *preferred format in Adobe InDesign*)

## Timeline

Timeline is estimated and deliverable focused. The project timeline is expected to run from November 2020 through December 2021.

- RFP Released: September 30, 2020
- RFP closes: Wednesday, October 14, 2020 at 5:00 PM EST
- Consultant selections made and applicants informed: October 23, 2020
- Kick off meeting for economic recovery and resiliency plan: November 2020
- Development of Marquette County plan: November 2020- November 2021
- Virtual presentation on completed strategies and findings: December 2021
- Training program for rural county partner strategies: Q1 – Q2 2021
- Template completed for rural county partner strategies: Q2 2021

## Budget

This project is financed with funds provided through the U.S. EDA. The contract for this project may be subject to approval by the U.S. EDA.

Please include a basic outline of the program budget in the Cost Proposals section of the proposal.

## Proposal Submission

CUPPAD will accept submissions from contractors who demonstrate a clear understanding of the proposed project in the context of economic development and the unique ecosystem of the central U.P.

A complete proposal packet should include the following headings:

1. **Organization Overview/ Summary:** General information about your organization, including legal name, year of establishment, number of employees, and organizational experience and success directly related to the RFP content.
  - **Project Staff:** Identify the lead contact person and key personnel for project implementation, including their applicable skills. Identify the percentage of time key personnel will spend on the project. Acknowledge that key staffing changes must be discussed/approved by MFF. Attached resumes/ CV
  - **Markets Served:** Description of geographic/industry markets you typically serve.
  - **Services:** Description of your services and core competencies.
  - **Experience Type:** Description of types of experience and how it relates to current project.
  - **Work Samples:** Identify current, relevant projects and samples and how they will enhance the campaign's success.
2. **Project Approach:** Describe how you will operationalize the RFP deliverables and how they directly inform the goals of the project. If the firm anticipates subcontracting for a portion of the project, provide details on what elements of the project will be delegated, as well as resumes

and work samples of the intended subcontractor. Describe how the consulting team will work with CUPPAD and the local steering committee.

3. **Cost Proposal:** Present a basic draft budget including a breakdown of costs related to the deliverables and project administration. Budget should be broken down by task.
4. **Schedule and Required Information:** Timetable and information on written questions, contractual obligations and required clauses.

Please submit proposals electronically to Ryan Soucy, Senior Economic and Community Development Planner at [RSOUCY@CUPPAD.ORG](mailto:RSOUCY@CUPPAD.ORG). **The deadline for the submission of proposals is Wednesday, October 14<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 PM EST.** If there are any questions regarding this RFP, please contact Ryan Soucy by October 9<sup>th</sup> by email or phone at (231) 818-8019. An email confirming receipt of your submission will be sent within 24 hours. Applicants are encouraged to submit proposals early to avoid any technical difficulties. Late submissions will not be accepted, no exceptions.

### Selection Process and Evaluation

Proposals will be evaluated according to the quality of the responses to the sections identified in the Proposal Submission section. Proposals will be evaluated by content addressing our unique regional circumstances, experience of the consulting team and firm, portfolio of previous completed projects, and cost efficiency. Please ensure that your proposal is complete.

Proposals will be evaluated among a team of local partners between October 15<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>. A selected applicant will be contacted on October 23<sup>rd</sup>. Firms not selected will be contacted the following week. Please do not call to check on the status of this evaluation.

Proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria:

Criteria	Points
General completeness of the proposal relative to this RFP	20
Consultant's personnel capacity and experience	15
Quality and relevance of work samples in portfolio	15
Clarity and focus of project approach relative to <i>Deliverables</i> described	25
Familiarity with economic issues and opportunities in the region	5
Overall project cost efficiency	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>