

NOTICE FOR REQUESTS FOR PROPOSALS FOR
A DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

September 23, 2024

The Cascade Economic Development Corporation (CEDC) in partnership with the

CEDC of Cascade (hereinafter called the CEDC) will receive such proposals in

the office of and via email addressed to:

Holly McPherson, CEDC Staff

7600 Commerce Park

Dubuque, Iowa 52002

Hmcpherson @ecia.org

RE: The CEDC of Cascade Downtown Master Plan– RFP 2024

The Request for Proposal (RFP) contains the instructions governing the proposals to be submitted and the material to be included mandatory requirements that must be met to be eligible for consideration, and other requirements that each proposal must meet.

Proposals shall be submitted via email in .pdf format that allows for printing in hard copy in 8½x11 booklet format.

Respondents are requested to submit their proposal via email. COPIES OF THE PROPOSAL WILL BE RECEIVED UP TO THE HOUR OF 3:00 PM Central Time, OCTOBER 30, 2024.

The proposal must contain the signature of a duly authorized officer or agent of the Respondent's company empowered with the right to bind the Respondent.

Copies of the Strategic Plan Request for Proposals (RFP) Document is available from the CEDC website at: <https://www.CEDCofcascade.org/> or by contacting the point of contact: Holly McPherson, hmcpherson@ecia.org.

The CEDC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals. The CEDC reserves the right to disqualify incomplete proposals, waive minor defects as it deems applicable in the written proposals, request additional information from any respondent, change or modify the scope of the project at any time without penalty, negotiate terms with one or more of the respondents, reject any or all proposals without penalty and take any steps necessary to act the CEDC's best interest. Bids/proposals will not be considered for award if received after the official closing date and time.

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Section I – Introduction and Background

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

Cascade Economic Development Corporation (CEDC), a nonprofit corporation, was formed in 1988 to further the economic development of the city of Cascade as well as the immediate surrounding area and to promote and assist the growth and development of business challenges, including both small and large businesses. *The Cascade Economic Development Corporation’s mission is to foster, encourage, promote and aid business retention, expansion and attraction to improve the quality of life in the Cascade community*

Cascade recently had a downtown assessment conducted by Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA). This was paid for out of a DRA grant. Out of that assessment, unfortunately, as the Downtown Assessment Team met with various focus groups, including the youth of the community, they heard that downtown is: “dirty, dull, bland, lifeless, lacks shade, and you walk it and you’re done with nothing to see.” Fortunately, the IEDA team sees many opportunities to build upon the compact, walkable nature of downtown Cascade to make it the vibrant, thriving, and fun downtown the community desires. Per their report, the team feels like THIS is Cascade’s time. The community has seen recent improvements and new businesses and many people are interested in making a difference in the downtown. As a result of this study, the CEDC would like to work with a 3rd party to develop a downtown beautification/revitalization plan. They would like to take the steps necessary to make the downtown a walkable, shaded area to attract not only the locals, but the many tourists for years to come.

- 1.2 PURPOSE:** The project's goal is to establish a Master Plan for Downtown Cascade. The resulting plan must provide the necessary resources to guide future decision-making and positively impact the community effectively. Relevant information from existing plans/studies, like the recent Iowa Economic Development Authority’s (IEDA’s) Downtown Assessment, will be used when applicable throughout this process. The plan will also include the necessary resources for the Economic Development Authority and the CEDC to apply for additional funding assistance for Downtown improvements identified in the plan.

Responding firms should have significant experience conducting strategic planning processes involving employees and local governments.

Section 2: Scope of Services

The project shall include, but is not limited to, the following activities:

- 2.1 CEDC and the City of Cascade**—Coordination between the CEDC and the City of Cascade is critical to developing and implementing the Downtown Cascade plan. The

consultant is responsible for facilitating two meetings during the planning process:

- Project Kickoff Meeting—This joint meeting will kick off the project before the first public stakeholder meeting. It will cover the project's scope, schedule, and expectations and review feedback from the IEDA Downtown Assessment.
- Draft Master Plan Review Meeting—The second joint meeting, held online before the Draft Plan Open House, will focus on reviewing, discussing, and revising the Draft Master Plan Concept and Draft Action Plan for Implementation.

- 2.2 ***Public Stakeholder Meetings*** - Organize at least two public stakeholder meetings related to the Cascade Downtown Master Plan. These meetings will involve public participation, document feedback, and compile objectives, policies, and goals derived from public input. The meetings will also identify groups or individuals participating in workgroups or committees formed to support Downtown planning efforts.
- 2.3 Community Workshop—Facilitate a Community Workshop to identify issues, opportunities, and goals for Downtown Cascade. The workshop will review the IEDA Downtown Assessment and assess existing conditions.
- 2.4 Draft Master Plan Open House—The second public meeting, organized as an open house, will allow community members to review and provide feedback on the development concept and Action Plan for Implementation related to the Downtown Master Plan.
- 2.5 ***Issues & Opportunities***—Analyze issues and opportunities specific to Downtown Cascade and build on public meeting discussions, detailed feedback, and goals identified in the IEDA Downtown Assessment.
- 2.6 ***Downtown Character Element*** – Develop objectives, policies, and programs that highlight Downtown Cascade's unique characteristics and qualities, ensuring the district's heritage and growth are preserved and celebrated.
- 2.7 ***Existing Conditions Analysis***—Conduct an in-depth analysis of issues related to Downtown Cascade, including the pedestrian environment, public infrastructure, utilities, parking, local access, traffic flow, historical significance, land use patterns, and surrounding conditions.
- 2.8 ***Economic Analysis*** – Assess Downtown Cascade's current market and business opportunities using ESRI Business Analyst's online tools and reports.
- 2.9 ***Reinvestment Concept***—Create a Reinvestment Concept outlining recommended improvements to key areas, such as intersections, signage, streetscapes, building facades, public spaces, urban design, management, and community engagement. The concept will also suggest preferred future land uses by block or lot.
- 2.10 ***Action/Implementation Plan***—Develop an Action/Implementation Plan detailing how to

achieve the goals of the Downtown Cascade plan. The Plan will include a list of programs, specific actions, potential land development regulation changes, ordinances, and a 10-year improvement schedule.

Section 3: Proposal Requirements and Submission

Consultants who submit a proposal may be asked to present it to the selection committee. The CEDC reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to reject any and all proposals. Any contract awarded for services shall not become effective until approved by the Cascade CEDC Council.

Proposals should provide a straightforward and concise description of the Respondent's capabilities to satisfy the requirements of the RFP. It should explain the work to be performed, how the work will be accomplished, and the expected results. Emphasis should be placed on completeness and clarity of content. Responses of excessive length are discouraged. To be considered, all proposals must contain the following information with an emphasis on adding value to the CEDC. Proposals not addressing the following items may be considered non-responsive.

3.1 PROPOSAL FORMAT: Each proposal should be organized to clearly address the following requirements, as a minimum:

3.1.1 Availability, credentials, and related experience:

- a. List the full name, address, telephone number, and email address of your firm and, if applicable, of the office from which the services are to be provided. Designate the person to serve as project manager and key staff that will be assigned to this project. Include specific information on the staff's experience with public sector strategic plans.

Provide information on specific experiences that have resulted in successful outcomes in conducting strategic plans and making presentations to public bodies. List the name or names of the persons in your firm authorized to negotiate the proposed contract associated with this RFP.

- b. Provide an overview of your firm's services and experience in performing Strategic Plans. Promotional material should NOT be included.
- c. Explain in detail how the project manager and key staff will be assigned to this project. Identify the availability of the project manager and key staff to address any questions or concerns as well as to attend meetings to present the findings to key CEDC of Cascade staff.
- d. Has litigation ever been filed against your firm? If so, explain in detail. Is there litigation against your firm currently in progress? If so, explain in detail.

3.1.2 Statement of Methods and Procedures:

- a. Provide a statement describing the Scope of Work as you understand it and provide a detailed breakdown and description of the specific steps, services, methods, and study products that will be employed to gather the data, analyze the findings, develop recommendations, and coordinate implementation as requested. Firms may elect to include in this section any innovative methods or concepts that might be beneficial to the CEDC as long as the minimum requirements are met.

3.1.3 Structure and Content of Work Product:

- a. Describe the way in which the work product will be structured and presented upon completion.

3.1.4 Project Time Table:

- a. Provide the anticipated start and completion date for the project and estimated dates for the fulfillment of each work phase and task. This proposed project timetable will be used as the basis for the project timetable to be included in the project contract. The CEDC anticipates that the successful consultant will be able to begin this project on or December 1, 2024.
- b. Describe techniques your firm would use to keep the Executive Team abreast of the progress of the project and how your firm will meet the proposed timeline.

3.1.5 References:

- a. All proposals should include a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of at least five (5) references of the same or larger size and complexity as the CEDC who will attest to the successful completion and implementation of a strategic plan by your firm during the past five (5) years.

3.1.6 Cost of Services:

- a. Provide a detailed not-to exceed cost estimate for all work to be performed. The breakdown should include, at a minimum, the following for each task to be performed: the timeline for completion, the estimated number of hours for completion, and the not-to exceed cost for that task. Do not include the cost of “additional services” outside the scope of work in response to this proposal.

3.2 INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTING PROPOSALS

3.2.1 Submission of Proposals: Proposals will be received until 3:00 PM (CT) on October 30, 2024. All proposals must be submitted via email with the following information in the Subject line:

The CEDC of Cascade Downtown Master Plan– RFP 2024

To be considered, consultants must submit a complete response to the RFP.

The proposal must be signed by an official authorized to bind the Consultant to its provisions. Quotations must include a statement as to the period during which the quotation remains valid, which must be at least ninety (90) days.

Emailed proposals must be received by Holly McPherson at hmcpherson@ecia.org no later than the time specified. Proposals shall be submitted via email in .pdf format that allows for printing in hard copy in 8½x11 booklet format. An email will be sent confirming receipt of the proposal within 24 hours or by **3:00 p.m. (CT) on October 30, 2024.**

NO LATE SUBMITTALS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

Proposals may be withdrawn or modified by email resubmission in full prior to the proposal submission deadline.

If it becomes necessary to revise any part of this RFP, an addendum will be provided to all Respondents who have been placed on the official list with the Holly McPherson at hmcpherson@ecia.org.

The CEDC reserves the right to accept or reject all or any part of any proposal, waive informalities and award the contract to the best consultant who will serve the interests of the CEDC.

3.3 GENERAL INFORMATION

3.3.1 Questions, Inquiries and Clarifications:

- a. Any questions or other inquiries concerning this RFP must be submitted via email by October 23, 2024, to Holly McPherson (Point of contract), e-mail: hmcpherson@ecia.org. Written questions and inquiries will be answered via e-mail.
- b. Clarifications and additional information, if any, will be posted as addendums on the CEDC website at <https://www.CEDCofcascade.org/>. It is the responsibility of the prospective proposer to check the website for updates.

3.3.2 Proprietary Information: Trade secrets or proprietary information submitted by any Respondent in connection with this solicitation will not be subject to disclosure under the Iowa Freedom of Information Act; however, **the offeror must invoke the protections of this section PRIOR to or upon submission of the data or other materials and must clearly identify the data or other materials to be protected and state the reasons why protection is necessary.**

3.3.3 Confidentiality: All proposals and material submitted become the property of the CEDC. All proposal information, including detailed price and cost information, shall be held in confidence during the evaluation process and before the Notice of Intent to Award is issued. Thereafter, proposals shall

become disclosed as a matter of public record.

3.3.4 Joint ventures shall not be allowed with this RFP.

3.3.5 Conflict of Interest: Each proposal shall include a statement indicating whether the firm or any persons working on the contract has a possible conflict of interest and, if so, the specific nature of the conflict. The CEDC of Cascade reserves the right to cancel the award if any interest disclosed from any source could either give the appearance of a conflict or cause speculation as to the objectivity of the program to be developed by the proposing firm. The CEDC’s determination regarding conflict(s) of interest shall be final.

3.3.6 Limitations: This request for Proposals does not commit the CEDC to award a contract, pay any costs incurred in preparation for travel to the CEDC, to present a proposal to this request, or to procure or contract for services. All proposals submitted in response to this Request for Proposal become the property of the CEDC. The CEDC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received or to cancel this Request for Proposal in part or in its entirety. After proposals are reviewed, the CEDC will select the proposal that is deemed in the best interest of the organization.

Section 4: Timeline for Selection Process

Downtown Master Plan Timeline	
Date	Activity
October 1, 2024	Release of RFP
October 23, 2024	Clarification Submission Deadline.
October 30, 2024	Proposals Due
October 30, 2024 – November 15, 2024	Evaluation of Proposals
The week of November 21, 2024	Award of Contract/CEDC/City Approval
December 1, 2024	Work Begins (or as soon as possible after the contract is signed).
April 30, 2025	Completion of Work and Final Report

Section 5: Evaluation Criteria and Selection Process

The CEDC will use all facts, information, and data available to finalize its evaluation of the RFP’s. Failure of the Respondent to provide any information requested in this RFP may result in disqualification of the proposal. The sole objective will be to recommend the award of a contract to the Respondent whose proposal is most responsive and most advantageous to the needs and goals of the CEDC.

Proposals will be evaluated with respect to the completeness of data provided, support for all claims made, overall approach taken in the proposal, and response to interview questions if interviews are conducted. The technical evaluation and ranking of proposals shall be accomplished utilizing the following criteria:

- Previous background and experience relevant to this RFP, including services provided to similar type and sized clients. (15 points possible)
- Experience designing and implementing the downtown master planning process, engaging stakeholders and developing a robust, actionable plan. (15 points possible)
- Thoroughness of material submitted, including the proposed work plan and type of service provided. (15 points possible)
- Consultant's conceptual approach and process related to the scope of work as well as the ability to manage and coordinate the project effectively with the CEDC. (15 points possible)
- Consultant's understanding of the needs of public and business engagement and proposing solutions to address those needs (15 points possible)
- Qualifications of project staff, including internal staff and/or staff that may be involved in duties being outsourced. (15 points possible)
- Cost of services proposed. Fee proposals should outline fees for each discrete element of the classification and compensation study and categories of direct expenses that are not included within the fee proposal and an estimated budget for these expenses. (15 points possible)
- Projected time frame, from beginning to a prompt project completion date. (15 points possible)
- References. References should be from projects similar in nature. (15 points possible)

TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE 135

Section 6: Award of Contract

Each Respondent submitting a proposal in response to this RFP will be notified via email as to acceptance or rejection of their proposal. The CEDC plans to release such letters within **ninety (90) days** of the proposed submission date. The CEDC may delay this action if it is deemed to be in the best interest of the CEDC.

The contract will be awarded to the best qualified according to the bid/proposal criteria and a written award letter will be issued.

1. The award of a bid/proposal requires formal approval by the CEDC council.

Contract(s) may be negotiated with Respondent(s) whose proposal is selected by the CEDC, considering cost as well as other factors based on the criteria described above, all as solely determined by the CEDC. Award of contract may be made without discussion or opportunity for oral presentation after proposals are received. Proposals should, therefore, be submitted initially on the most favorable terms, from both price and technical standpoints.

The CEDC reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to waive any informality in proposals received, to accept or reject any or all of the items in the proposals, and to award the contract in whole or in part if it is deemed in the best interest of the CEDC.

No proposal will be accepted from, nor will a contract be awarded to, any Respondent who is deemed to be irresponsible or unreliable by the CEDC.

Taxes – The CEDC, is exempt from any and all taxes.

Non-Iowa Corporations – Unless waived by the CEDC, before or at the time that the contract is awarded to a corporation domiciled outside the State of Iowa, such corporation shall obtain authorization to do business in the State of Iowa and appoint an agent for service of process.

Such corporations must furnish the CEDC with a certificate from the State of Iowa to the effect that a certificate of authority to do business in the State of Iowa has been issued by the office and is still valid. There shall also be procured from the Iowa Secretary of State a certified copy of the designation of place of business and appointment of agent for service of process or a letter from the Iowa Secretary of State that such designation of place of business and agent for service of process has been made.

The laws of the State of Iowa shall govern the contract (herein referred to as the Contract) executed between the successful bidder and the CEDC and any interpretations or constructions thereof. Further, the place of performance and transaction of business shall be deemed to be in the State of Iowa, and in the event of litigation, the exclusive venue and place of jurisdiction shall be the State of Iowa.