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NORTHERN VIRGINIA

NORTHERN VIRGINIA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ALLIANCE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS: Evaluation and Establishment of a Regional Economic Development Organization

Overview:

The Economic Development Departments and Agencies of the 10 Counties and Cities located in the geographic area known as Northern Virginia (NOVA) seek a reputable third-party organization to assist in developing and establishing a joint regional economic development organization (REDO). Each member jurisdiction has its own economic development staff and the REDO is intended to supplement those efforts, not replace them.

Members include:

[City of Alexandria](#)
[Arlington County](#)
[City of Fairfax](#)
[Fairfax County](#)
[City of Falls Church](#)
[Fauquier County](#)
[Loudoun County](#)
[City of Manassas](#)
[City of Manassas Park](#)
[Prince William County](#)

Background and General Nature of Desired Services:

The communities that make up Northern Virginia are part of the Washington DC metropolitan statistical area, the largest metro area in the US without a REDO. NOVA is one of the fastest growing and most diverse communities in America. The localities that make up the region are home to; more than 2.5 million people, the headquarters or business operations of some of the world's largest corporations, and countless Federal government offices and contractors.

Collectively the parties are soliciting proposals to guide the development and launch of a REDO.

The following actions and deliverables are expected to have been accomplished at project completion:

- 1) Stakeholder Meetings to solicit input
 - a. Develop questions and administer survey
 - i. Survey participants are expected to include all the economic development directors, chief executive/administrator (City Manager or County Manager) and

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NORTHERN VIRGINIA

- chief elected officials in each locality; 3-5 regional agencies or groups with an economic development focus; the CEO or President of Chambers of Commerce representing each locality; and 1-3 key business leaders in each locality.
 - ii. Additional online surveys or stakeholder solicitation for input as may be needed
- 2) Best in Class examples of highly effective REDO's
 - a. Provide 3-5 examples of other REDO's that most closely align with the type of organization NOVA EDA could become, including which elements make them particularly effective (KPIs, metrics, etc.).
 - 3) Identification of Organization Structure/ Initiation of Corporate Formation If Appropriate
 - a. Recommended corporate structure.
 - b. Draft articles of incorporation; draft bylaws; assist with filings at project end.
 - c. Recommended governance structure: composition and makeup of Board of Directors; ex officio participation; executive committee structure; committee structure
 - d. Recommendation on whether the REDO is a public/private partnership or a quasi-governmental agency
 - 4) Recommended Staffing Structure
 - a. Number and types of positions; position descriptions; salary scale
 - 5) Strategic Plan
 - a. Determine the Vision and Mission of the NOVA EDA as well as initial Goals and Objectives. The proposal must acknowledge and address:
 - i. NOVA EDA has a brand – “inNOVation lives here”.
 - ii. The REDO will continue to fulfill the primary objective of serving as the single point of contact with the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) in the same capacity as other REDOs in Virginia.
 - iii. The members are currently collaborating on external marketing initiatives and talent acquisition/development, which is expected to continue.
 - iv. The members have agreed that research into regional demographics, workforce, and other site selection factors is a key supporting element of a future REDO
 - 6) Marketing Plan
 - a. Key focus on an initial plan that will include the types of marketing materials required, an outline of each, and expected costs to immediately launch the NOVA EDA onto a global stage.
 - 7) Budget
 - a. A DRAFT organizational budget that will give the members a collective idea of the types and sources of funding needed to run the REDO.
 - b. Identify possible grants from governmental agencies, non-profits, or foundations that may be used to offset early-stage expenses.
 - 8) Media Plan for Relaunch
 - a. Fully finalized media kit containing targets and materials as well as a strategy for promoting the relaunch and responding to media inquiries.
 - 9) Phased Approach to Growth
 - a. The NOVA EDA is a fledgling organization created from the collective desire of its members to more effectively collaborate in certain areas of economic development. The

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group was formed in September 2019. While positive progress has been made, it is recognized the REDO is still very much in the “start-up” phase. Consequently, an additional deliverable includes a phased approach that paints a realistic picture as to the expected progress the organization should be expected to achieve. The specific bullets under each heading are for illustrative purposes and not to be considered comprehensive.

- i. Start-up (year 1): Legal establishment, initial budget, media relaunch, early staffing
- ii. Ramp-up (years 1-3): Staffing, budget, marketing, strategies/actions
- o Stabilization (years 3-5): What does this look like and how will we know we’re there?

10) Benchmarks/Checkups and Deliverables

- a. It is expected there will be no fewer than 3 progress reports delivered during the engagement.

Final Report to include: stakeholder survey results; examples of best in class REDOs; recommended organizational structure including staffing, budget; strategic and marketing plan including media kit for relaunch; phased timeline for REDO’s growth.

Proposal Requirements/Evaluation Criteria:

Please submit a summary of your firm’s qualifications, capabilities and services, resumes for your key personnel, and identify who will act as the lead and primary point of contact on the project along with an estimate of fees for the services requested, a projected timeline of feasibility study and campaign activities, and references. Of specific note, please:

- Detail your recent (within the last two to three years) experience with regional economic development organizations
- List recent experience with studies and campaigns for new economic development organizations
- Provide a list of references for your three most recent economic development campaigns
- Provide a detailed timeline for completion of the project
- Detail any customization of services and pricing models. Please ensure your pricing is all-inclusive and includes any and all personnel and partner costs needed to complete the work, anticipated travel and incidental expenses.
- Detail your process on record management and client billing
- Your expectations of the NOVA EDA Members

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A subcommittee composed of representatives from some of the EDOs in the NOVA EDA will review all submissions and make a recommendation to the members of the NOVA EDA. The full NOVA EDA body will make the final decision with the intent to make a final decision by October, 2021.

Additional Services: Funding Feasibility Study and Campaign Management Services

The following information is not required for your response but will help the NOVA EDA in making the necessary long-term decisions this proposal explores. If the NOVA EDO determines to become a public/private partnership, then additional services may be required to assist in fundraising. Services will be required to develop and conduct a Funding Feasibility Study including, but not limited to:

- Draft a case for support for the project/program
- Detail your recent (within the last two to three years) experience with regional economic development organizations
- Assist with identification of prospective interviewees
- Conduct confidential interviews with NOVA EDA board, top prospective investors and community leaders and influencers
- Provide a summary of feedback of the project/program from interviewees
- Prepare a realistic funding campaign goal and any other pertinent recommendations that would provide the framework for a successful capital campaign.

The report must include but is not limited to:

- Challenges, barriers, opportunities and perceptions of the NOVA EDA.
- Identify prospects for a campaign leader role and possible campaign volunteers.
- Include in the final report: methodology, conclusions, size of potential base, size of potential dollar amount and factors that are outside the campaign that might influence the outcome.

If feasible conduct a Capital Campaign including, but not limited to:

- Develop campaign strategy in partnership with NOVA EDA members and Board
- Develop all campaign materials, including refinement of the case for support
- Identify a database of prospective campaign investors
- Assist in developing “Ask” strategies for all prospective members

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NORTHERN VIRGINIA

- Conduct Ask meetings alongside staff and volunteer leaders
- Provide comprehensive and timely progress reports on the status of the campaign
- Work cooperatively with members and Board to complete the campaign within the targeted timeframe

Timeline and Submission Process:

The Loudoun County Department of Economic Development will be accepting responses on behalf of the NOVA EDA. All responses must be received to the email address listed below no later than **5:00pm on Friday, September 10th, 2021.**

Email Responses To: LoudounBiz@loudoun.gov

Please use the following in your subject line: NOVA EDA RFP RESPONSE: (Company Name)

Any questions should be sent to the same email listed above. If needed, questions may be shared with all NOVA EDA members and answered by the most appropriate source for the question.