



Preparation of an Economic Development Strategy for Eastern Ontario

Request for Proposal (RFP)

February 2013

CLOSING DATE:

Friday, March 1, 2013

12:00:00 PM

Please note: Late submissions will be returned, unopened.

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Background

For a number of years, the Eastern Ontario Wardens Caucus has identified economic development as a key issue for the region of eastern Ontario (EO). More recently, at its Annual General Meeting in January of 2013, the EOWC confirmed that an economic development strategy for EO would continue as a priority issue for 2013.

The EOWC has done significant project work related to economic development and has had success with milestone projects, including the establishment of the Eastern Ontario Development Fund (EODF), the Eastern Ontario Development Program (EODP) and the Eastern Ontario Regional Network (EORN). The EODF is a very successful job creation program for EO designed by the EOWC and implemented by the Province of Ontario. When fully implemented, \$80 million will be invested by the Province with over \$640 million invested by the private sector. The EODP is a \$10 million yearly program aimed at community development in EO.

The EORN is one of the largest infrastructure projects ever approved in EO. The project is well underway and will result in over 95 percent of the homes and businesses in EO having access to high-speed internet services at affordable prices. At least 450,000 homes and businesses will soon be able to connect to internet services featuring 10 Mbps download speeds and 100G of bandwidth capacity. This \$170 million project is being built through the support of federal, provincial, municipal and private sector funding. The total value of the project rises to more than \$260 million when private sector in-kind contributions are included. EORN will go a long way towards levelling the playing field for businesses in rural Ontario who need access to high-speed internet services to compete in the regional and global marketplace.

Other economic development related projects completed include an economic summit bringing together private sector businesses and other stakeholders to outline barriers to economic development, and ground breaking research documents such as the Prosperity Plan, the Regional Data Set, and the recently completed Report on the Financial Sustainability of Local Government in Eastern Ontario.

The goal of the proposed economic development strategy is to utilize the research completed by the EOWC, and other agencies and organizations to identify specific regional actions that will improve the economy of EO or improve the conditions for economic development throughout EO.

Project Description/Deliverables

The purpose of this project is to create a strategy that generates and implements actions at the regional level and complements economic development efforts at the local level throughout EO. This includes counties and their local municipalities, as well as separated municipalities. The final strategy will include the following:

Vision

The economic development strategy should include a concise vision statement outlining the desired future state of the economy of EO in the year 2020. The development of the vision will require the design and implementation of a consultation session with key stakeholders in EO. Alternatively, the vision may be developed by the Guiding Coalition based on a review of existing economic development documents for EO.

Environmental Scan – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities

The successful Respondent will undertake the following and complete an environmental scan:

- Gather and analyze data related to the existing economic conditions in EO and outline the key findings;
- Gather and analyze data related to the socio-economic issues having an impact on economic development in EO;
- Review recent studies/strategies completed by community economic development agencies and organizations in EO;
- Survey existing economic development agencies to determine key economic development priorities for EO;
- Survey key businesses in EO to determine any barriers to job growth or retention;
- Consult with the business community to identify barriers to job creation and retention, and future opportunities for economic growth;
- Review recent EOWC and Eastern Ontario Mayors Caucus (EOMC) priorities related to economic development; and
- Incorporate, wherever possible, the findings of Kawartha Lakes Community Futures Development Corporation's Eastern Ontario Transportation Needs Analysis (project currently underway).

Identification of Key Economic Development Issues

The successful applicant will:

- Identify key regional economic sectors for EO;
- Identify regional issues/barriers to economic growth
- Identify opportunities in existing sectors

- Identify opportunities in new sectors

Actions and Implementation Plan to Address Key Issues

Once the key economic development issues and opportunities are identified, actions to address the issues must be formulated and implementation plans must be outlined. The actions should be focused at the regional level. The implementation plan should be supported by a timetable covering the study period in yearly or bi-yearly increments. This will allow successes to be measured over the short term, and ensure that the project stays focussed.

Examples of regional actions or projects could include:

- EORN and pursuing a Smart Community designation;
- Infrastructure funding for municipalities in EO;
- An 'Eastern Ontario lens', similar to the Northern and Rural Lens proposed by Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA). This tool requires an assessment of the need and impacts of legislation and programs on the affected area, in this case, EO, and/or
- Pursuing a regional immigration program.

There are numerous organizations and agencies involved in economic development throughout EO and there are numerous strategic plans at the local level. However, with the exception of regional marketing by the Ontario East Economic Development Commission, very little has been done in terms of implementing strategic actions at the regional level. Therefore, as part of this undertaking it is expected that various forms of consultation will be required, including surveys and interviews, as part of this undertaking.

The City of Ottawa

The City of Ottawa will be consulted during the preparation of the Eastern Ontario Economic Development Strategy in the following manner:

- An initial notice of the project along with the Terms of Reference will be submitted to the City of Ottawa for information purposes;
- The City of Ottawa will be asked to provide any economic development documents or strategies that they wish to provide for review or consideration by for the Economic Development Strategy;
- The consultant hired for the project will be required to review the City documents as part of their environmental scan;
- The consultant will be asked to identify economic development issues of mutual interest; and
- The City of Ottawa will be provided with an interim of draft report for their review and information.

Project Schedule

Work on the Project shall conclude no later than Friday, October 18, 2013 at 9:00:00 am. The use of eastern Ontario consultants and suppliers is encouraged without jeopardizing innovation and project quality.

Evaluation Criteria

RFPs will be assessed on the following weighted criteria:

Capability of Consultant to Carry Out the Work (25 points)

- Qualifications – assessment based on qualifications of both the firm and the assigned project personnel – 15 points
- Experience – assessment based on the experience of both the firm and the assigned project personnel relative to the tasks they are to perform – 10 points

Management of the Project (45 points)

- Organization – assessment based on planned organization of work and its consistency with the Terms of Reference – 15 points
- Proposed Approach – assessment based on the quality, thoroughness and logic of the proposed approach – 20 points
- Creativity and Originality, including quality of proposed analytical tools – 10 points

Quality and Cost of the Proposal (30 points)

- Quality of proposal based on: clarity and organization; activities breakdown for each staff member; and consultation process (if required) – 10 points
- Cost – assessment based on total cost and fees of key personnel – 20 points
- The lowest total Pricing Proposal will be awarded 20 points. Other higher bids will be awarded Overall Evaluation Rating points in accordance with the following formula:

$$(\text{Low Pricing Proposal} / \text{Higher Pricing Proposal}) \times 20$$

The EOWC will assess all proposals received in response to this RFP. Respondents (by providing a Proposal in response to this RFP) specifically acknowledge and agree that the Proposal selected by the EOWC is at the sole discretion of the EOWC and may not represent the lowest proposed cost. Further, Respondents specifically acknowledge and agree that the EOWC, at its sole discretion, may choose not to select any Proposal. The EOWC shall not be responsible to any Respondent for any liabilities, costs, expenses, losses or damage incurred by any Respondent arising from the selection of any Proposal, the rejection of all Proposals and the assessment made by the EOWC in respect of any Proposals. Submission of a Proposal constitutes acceptance of the above conditions as well as

agreement by the Respondent that the Respondent shall have no claim of any kind whatsoever against the EOWC as a result of participating in this RFP.

5. Miscellaneous

a. The successful Respondent must deliver at least one (1) presentation to the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus; and be available for three (3) meetings with the 'Guiding Coalition' for project updates, as required. As per the project's Terms of Reference, the Guiding Coalition will consist of:

- Three members from the EOWC CAOs group;
- One member from the Eastern Ontario Mayors' Caucus CAOs group;
- One member from the Ontario East Economic Development Commission; and
- One member from the Community Futures Development Corporations in eastern Ontario.

During the project, other stakeholders, including First Nations, will be canvassed for their input and interest in the project.

b. A draft version of the report will be due to EOWC staff and the Guiding Coalition on Friday, September 13, 2013 at 9:00:00 am, and the successful Respondent must be prepared to discuss the draft version and incorporate reasonable suggestions for additional content on this date.

c. Verbal information, directions and opinions, from whatever source, do not supersede nor do they elaborate upon the requirements of this RFP. Any changes in this RFP and the requirements hereunder shall be provided in writing by the EOWC to all Respondents in the form of a numbered addendum.

d. All communication and correspondence with the EOWC shall be addressed to:

Mr. T.J. Simpson
c/o Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus
United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry
26 Pitt Street
Cornwall, Ontario
K6J 3P2
Phone: 613-932-1515 ext. 202
Fax: 613-932-2913
Email: tsimpson@sdgcounties.ca

6. Request for Proposal Closing

1. Date of Closing: RFP submissions shall be made prior to 12:00:00 pm (Noon) on Friday, March 1, 2013.
2. Package Submission Process: Proposal in response to this RFP must be submitted in a closed and sealed envelope to Mr. T.J. Simpson at the address set out in paragraph 5 (d) above with the name and address of the Proponent clearly displayed on the outside of the envelope.

The EOWC reserves the right to waive irregularities and to reject any or all bids. The EOWC may, in its sole and unfettered discretion, consider compliant any bid not prepared and/or not submitted in accordance with the provisions hereof and may waive any informalities or reject any and all bids.

3. IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE RESPONDENT TO UNDERSTAND ALL ASPECTS OF THE RFP. SHOULD ANY DETAILS BE LACKING OR OMITTED OR ANY ERRORS APPEAR IN THE RFP DOCUMENT, IT SHALL BE UNDERSTOOD AND IS AGREED BY THE RESPONDENT, THAT THE PROPOSAL SHALL BE EVALUATED AS SUBMITTED. THE EOWC SHALL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY INTERPRETATION OR MISUNDERSTANDING OF THE RFP ON THE PART OF THE RESPONDENT, REGARDLESS OF THE CAUSE OF THAT INTERPRETATION OR MISUNDERSTANDING.