

**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS/PROPOSALS (RFQ/P)
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLANNING CONSULTING SERVICES**

Introduction

The Town of Altavista (Town) and the Altavista Economic Development Authority (EDA) are seeking assistance of a professional economic development or management consultant for the development of a strategic plan for the Town's economic development efforts.

Sealed proposals for **Consulting Services for the Development of the Town of Altavista Economic Development Strategic Plan** will be accepted until 2:00 p.m. on Monday, March 26, 2018, in the Town Manager's Office, 510 7th Street, Altavista, VA 24517

Please be observant of all proposal instructions and specifications. Should any questions arise concerning this proposal, contact Waverly Coggsdale at the Town of Altavista. He can be reached at jwcoggsdale@altavistava.gov or via phone at (434) 369-5001.

The Town of Altavista reserves the right to accept or reject, in whole or part, any and all proposals.

Background

The Town of Altavista was incorporated in 1912 and operates under the Council/Manager form of government with an elected Mayor and Town Council appointing a full-time Town Manager. The Town's population is approximately 3,500. The Town of Altavista has a strong industrial base.

The EDA is a volunteer board of directors comprised of seven local residents, business and property owners. The Town's Economic Development Office serves as staff resource for the EDA.

The Town of Altavista is located approximately 20 miles south of the City of Lynchburg and approximately 30 miles north of the City of Danville and is easily accessible from Route 29. The Town is approximately 5 square miles.

Project Description and Strategic Plan Objectives

The Town of Altavista is seeking a qualified firm or individual with significant experience working with *Economic Development Strategic Plan*. The *Economic Development Strategic Plan* must provide a multi-faceted vision for the town's economic and business development and be responsive to the priorities of Altavista's economic development partners and have a buy-in from the community at large. The *Economic Development Strategic Plan* should cover, at a minimum, a five year period and include all the items listed below.

Community Assessment

Review and analysis of existing demographic and socioeconomic data, labor force characteristics, sales tax revenue and other key economic development data. Through a SWOT analysis identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for the Town of Altavista. Evaluate the physical factors that affect development within the Town such as topography, flooding issues and needed infrastructure. Review and analyze future development and other needs for the Town. This should include planned housing development, other housing types that are nonexistent or lacking in the Town (i.e. garden homes, multifamily), future economic growth, population growth, and infrastructure needs (sewer, water, telecommunications, roadways, etc.)

Workforce, Training and Educational Analysis

Review of the demographics, trends, available resources and training opportunities that impact the local workforce. Evaluate the role of workforce development organizations in the area. Evaluate and analyze the workforce and training needs of current and future industries in the Town. This should include review of top occupations in all industries, labor shed and commutation patterns and education and training level typically required for top occupations (used to assess needed educational initiatives, programs and partnerships). Analysis of average wages or earnings in comparison to state and national averages.

Partnership Assessment

Through review of the local entities that have a role and interest in improving the community to promote economic development, a guide will be developed to clearly delineate the roles and responsibilities of each group, with the Town/EDA being the lead agency. The community entities will include, but not be limited to: Altavista Area Chamber of Commerce, Altavista On Track (Main Street program), and the Town's Planning Commission. Each entity should be involved in the process.

Development and Redevelopment Opportunities/Strategies

Identify areas within the Town that would be strategic locations for future economic development. Identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges of these sites as well as availability of water, sewer, electric power, natural gas and fiber (digital infrastructure). Identify development and redevelopment "best practices" from other municipalities within the region and state, especially those similar to Altavista. Suggest new or improved strategies for development and/or redevelopment within the Town. This shall include the identification of creation of future business/industry park sites to assist in the recruitment of new industry, as well as an assessment of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for these sites.

Existing Business Retention and Expansion Efforts & Strategies

Analyze current business retention and expansion (BRE) efforts by the Town and EDA. Provide recommendations on how the Town/EDA can assist local businesses with improving marketing efforts and customer base. Identify BRE "best practices" by other EDA and local governments.

Economic Development Incentive Policy

Analyze and review the current policies that are used for Economic Development Incentives. Identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the current policies. Identify economic development policy "best practices" from other municipalities and economic development departments within the state. Make recommendations on how the policy can be improved based on research and analysis.

Marketing and Website Analysis

Review and analysis of current marketing efforts by the Town; to include, but not limited to print material, digital material, website and social media. Develop a strategy to improve marketing efforts on all fronts. Perform a review and analysis of the Economic Development website and social media efforts for ideas on how to improve these efforts. Provide recommendations on how to improve the existing website and social media efforts..

Department Analysis

Analyze the current operations within the Town's Economic Development Office including but not limited to organizational structure, department capabilities, staffing, revenue sources, etc. Examine the relationship between the staff and the EDA Board, as well as the economic development partners. Make recommendations on how to improve the department's operations and the relationships of all parties involved in the economic development activities for the Town of Altavista.

Implementation Plan

Provide implementation plan that incorporates all elements into an operational economic development program. Recommend immediate course of action to implement and set out first year strategy by quarter and a second – fifth year plan implementation strategy. Provide short-term and long-term goals and achievable milestones to facilitate program creation and to coincide with implementation plan. Provide budget and implementation schedule for program.

Professional Standards and Abilities

Consultants shall be properly licensed in accordance with applicable local, state and federal regulations and should demonstrate their ability to:

- Perform all tasks in accordance with generally accepted professional standards.
- Provide to the Town the best possible advice and consultation within Consultants authority and capacity.
- Assign work to be performed to qualified personnel in sufficient numbers to meet negotiated performance schedules.

Proposal Preparation

Interested firms should submit one (1) paper copy and one (1) electronic copy (on CD or thumb drive) of the proposal, to:

Office of the Town Manager
Town of Altavista Town Hall
510 7th Street
P.O. Box 420
Altavista, VA 24517

Electronic copy must be identical to the hard copy. If the proposal contains proprietary information offerors shall provide a copy clearly marked “REDACTED COPY” in addition to the provided hard copy.

Questions related to the RFQ/P and the selection process should be in writing and directed to:

Waverly Coggsdale
Town Manager
Fax: (434) 369-4369
Email: jwcoggsdale@altavistava.gov

Questions or requests for clarification may be faxed or emailed to the contact listed above by 5:00 p.m. local time on March 21, 2018. All relevant questions and responses to inquiries will be distributed to the known RFQ/P holders and posted on the Town’s website. It is the responsibility of all Offerors to ensure that they have received all addenda and to include signed copies of any and all addenda with their proposals.

All proposals must be in an opaque, sealed envelope or box and clearly marked: “Economic Development Strategic Plan Services RFP”. Proposals shall clearly indicate the legal name, address and telephone number of the offeror (company, firm, partnership or individual). All expenses for making this proposal to the Town shall be borne by the offeror. **All proposals**

shall be received at the address listed above no later than Monday, March 26, 2018 at 2:00 p.m., local time. Any proposal received after this time and date will not be accepted. The Town of Altavista is not responsible for delays in the delivery of the mail by the U.S. Postal Service, private couriers, or the inter-office mail system. The Offeror has the sole responsibility to have the proposal received by the Altavista Town Hall at the above address and by the above stated time and date. Clearly identified proprietary information will not be disclosed during the selection process. Please submit an Attachment that identifies any proprietary information. Proposals may be withdrawn any time prior to proposal opening upon written request by the Offeror to Town Hall.

The Offeror is advised that oral explanations or instructions given by Town personnel during the Request for Qualifications/Proposals process, or at any time prior to the award shall be nonbinding.

Persons intending to submit a proposal are specifically cautioned that the Offeror is barred from pleading misunderstanding or deception because of estimates of quantities, character, location, or other conditions surrounding the same.

Modifications, additions or changes to the Terms and Conditions of this Request by the Offeror may be cause for rejection.

Any proposal in response to this solicitation shall be valid for 60 days. At the end of the 60 days, the proposal may be withdrawn at the written request of the Offeror. If the proposal is not withdrawn at that time, it remains in effect until an award is made or the solicitation is cancelled.

The selection of the successful firms will be done by competitive negotiations in accordance to the Virginia Procurement Act. The Town may offer agreements to more than one firm.

Submittals should contain a cover letter, not exceeding two pages, and concise informative responses to each of the selection criteria listed below. Other information may be included in an appendix.

Selection Schedule

The Town intends to follow, but will not be bound by, the following selection timeframe:

Issuance of RFQ/P	Week of March 5 th
Deadline for Questions Submitted in Writing	March 21 st
Response to Written Questions	March 23 rd
Deadline for Proposal Submittal	March 26 th
Interviews, if necessary	Week of April 16 th
Town Council / EDA Approval	May 8 th

Proposals will be reviewed by Town staff and a panel of EDA members and evaluated to determine which proposals best meet the criteria of the RFQ/P. Evaluation of the proposals is expected to be completed within 21 days of receiving the proposals. The final selection will be based on completeness, experience with agencies, technical merit, and time to perform.

Evaluation Criteria

The Towns' selection committee will evaluate proposals based on the following factors:

1. Qualifications of firm and project team members;
2. Previous related work and references;
3. Project Management Approach and Work Plan;
4. Timeline of project;
5. Existing knowledge of the Town of Altavista.
6. Quality of presentation.

Selection Procedure

Selection of the successful proposal(s) will be based upon submission of proposals meeting the selection criteria. Proposals determined to not meet one or more material RFP requirements may be excluded. The minimum selection criteria will include:

- Experience, professional competence, and qualifications of the CONSULTANT and staff to provide the specified services. (20 points)
- References and previous client evaluations from other government and/or commercial entities shall be considered to include documented experience in performing and completing similar tasks/services for other governmental and/or commercial clients in a professional, efficient and timely manner and within an established budget. (15 points)
- Measurable Strategy/Quality of Approach & Proposed Methodology (25 points)
- Understanding of Objectives (20 points)
- Record of responsive to client requests. (5 points)
- Extent of Consultant organization (5 points)
- Present permanent staff availability (5 points)
- Project schedule (5 points)
- Cost of Services (**Short listed firms only**). Although prices, rates or fees **ARE NOT** to be submitted with the initial proposal response, such proposed non-binding and/or binding fees may be considered for those firms involved in the discussion and negotiation phase of the selection process. If labor rates are requested, the rates specified by the Offeror shall include all direct and indirect overhead costs, including but not limited to, transportation, general and administrative costs, etc. Labor rates will be paid on the basis of time at the site.

Selection Interviews

The Town/EDA reserves the right to hold selection interviews with any offeror submitting a proposal under this RFQ/P. These interviews will be held solely at the discretion of the Town and after the proposal scoring process. The intent of the Town/EDA is to hold interviews only with top-scoring offerors based on the proposal scoring process. The interviews would be attended by representatives of the Town/EDA, as well as the CONSULTANT's representative who would be the responsible charge of the project under this AGREEMENT. The selection interview will be used to gain further insight into the CONSULTANT's capabilities for the purpose of making a selection recommendation.

The Town/EDA intends to follow the guidelines of the Competitive Negotiation procedure for the Procurement of Professional Services as outlined in the Virginia Procurement Act. Based on information contained in proposals, a joint committee will invite two or more firms into individual discussions to determine which firm could best meet the needs of the Town/EDA.

Contract Award

The Town/EDA's evaluation committee will read, review and evaluate each proposal based on the criteria as stated in the proposal. A preliminary rating will be used to select the offerors for further consideration, the short list.

- The Town/EDA shall engage in individual discussions with two or more offerors deemed fully qualified, responsible and suitable on the basis of initial responses and with emphasis on professional competence, to provide the required services. Repetitive informal interviews shall be permissible. The offerors shall be encouraged to elaborate on their qualifications and performance data or staff expertise pertinent to the proposed project, as well as alternative concepts. In addition, offerors shall be informed of any ranking criteria that will be used by the Town in addition to the review of the professional competence of the offeror.
- The Request for Qualifications/Proposal shall **not**, however, request that offeror furnish estimates of man-hours or cost of services. At the discussion stage, the Town/EDA may discuss nonbinding fee schedules and/or total project costs including man-hours or costs of services. If an offeror is selected for interview, that offeror shall submit to the Town/EDA, within three (3) working days of notification, their non-binding fee/rate schedule. The individual offeror's fee/rate schedule should include a rate for all labor categories that the offeror anticipates using on the project.
- At the conclusion of discussion, on the basis of evaluation criteria so stated in the Request for Proposal and all information developed in the selection process to this point, the Town/EDA shall select in the order of preference two or more offerors whose professional qualifications and proposed services are deemed most meritorious.
- Negotiations shall then be conducted, beginning with the offeror ranked first. If a contract satisfactory and advantageous to the Town/EDA can be negotiated at a

price considered fair, the award shall be made to that offeror. Otherwise, negotiations with the offeror ranked first shall be formally terminated and negotiations conducted with the offeror ranked second, and so on until such a contract can be negotiated at a fair and reasonable price. Notwithstanding the foregoing, if the terms and conditions for multiple awards are included in the Request for Proposal, the Town/EDA may award contracts to more than one Consultant.

- Should the Town/EDA determine in writing and in its sole discretion that only one offeror is fully qualified or that one offeror is clearly more highly qualified and suitable than the others under consideration, a contract may be negotiated and awarded to that offeror.
- The contract document will incorporate by reference all requirements, terms and conditions of the solicitation and the Offeror's proposal as negotiated.
- The Town/EDA is not required to furnish a statement of the reasons why a particular proposal was not deemed the most advantageous or otherwise debrief an Offeror.

General Town of Altavista RFQ/P Terms and Conditions:

The Offeror in this section refers to the firm, entity, or individual submitting a proposal to the Town.

Payment will be made to the offeror once each month based upon Town approved satisfactory and actual services rendered and/or goods received and invoices submitted by offeror.

In the case of default by the successful Offeror or failure to deliver goods/services ordered by the time specified, the Town, after due written notice, may procure them from other sources and hold the Offeror responsible for any resulting additional purchase and administrative costs.

Contract Term: The initial term of this contract shall be effective for one (1) year from the date of Notice of Selection. Fees shall not exceed \$500,000 per contract. For any single contract the contract fee shall not exceed \$100,000, per VA State Code 2.2-4302.2. It is understood that the Architect's/Engineer's work may not be completed during the contract term; however, all terms and conditions of this contract shall survive until work is completed.

Federal Funds – Apply to Only Federal Funded Projects: During the course of its normal operation, the Town may become responsible for the advertisement and administration of roadway construction projects that are federally funded. For these projects, the federal guidelines and requirements identified in Executive Order 11246, U.S. DOT 1050.2, and the DBE Policy Statement shall be required.

By submitting their proposals, the Offerors certify that their proposals are made without collusion or fraud, and that they have not offered or received any kickbacks or inducements from any other Offeror, supplier, manufacturer or subcontractor in connection with their proposal, and that they have not conferred on any public employee having official responsibility for this procurement transaction any payment, loan, subscription, advance, deposit of money, services,

or anything of more than nominal value, present or promised, unless consideration of substantially equal or greater value was exchanged.

By submitting their proposals, Offerors certify to the Town that they will conform to the provisions of the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, as well as the Virginia Fair Employment Contracting Act of 1975, as amended, where applicable, the Virginians With Disabilities Act, The Americans With Disabilities Act, and §11-51 of the Virginia Public Procurement Act.

During the performance of any contract resulting from this RFQ/P, the contractor agrees as follows:

- a) The Offeror will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, religion, color, sex, or national origin, or disabilities, except where religion, sex or national origin is a bona fide occupational qualification reasonably necessary to the normal operation of the contractor. The contractor agrees to post in conspicuous places, available to employees and applicants for employment, notices setting forth the provisions of this nondiscrimination clause.
- b) The Offeror, in all solicitations or advertisements for employees placed by or on behalf of the contractor, will state that such contractor is an equal opportunity employer.
- c) Notices, advertisements, and solicitations placed in accordance with federal law, rule or regulation, shall be deemed sufficient for the purpose of these requirements.
- d) The Offeror shall include the above provisions in every subcontract or purchase order over \$10,000, so that the provisions will be binding upon each subcontractor or vendor.

By submitting their proposals, the Offerors certify that they do not and will not during the performance of any contract resulting from this RFQ/P employ illegal alien workers, or otherwise violate the provisions of the federal Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986.

By submitting their proposals, Offerors certify that they are not currently debarred by the Commonwealth of Virginia from submitting proposals on contracts for the type of goods covered by the solicitation, nor are they an agent of any person or entity that is currently debarred.

By entering into a contract, the contractor conveys, sells, assigns, and transfers to the Town all rights, title and interest in and to call causes of action it may now have or hereafter acquire under the antitrust laws of the United States and the Commonwealth of Virginia, relating to the particular goods or services purchased or acquired by the Town under said contract.

The Town may make such reasonable investigations as deemed proper and necessary to determine the ability of the Offeror to perform the services proposed, and the Offeror shall furnish to the Town all such information and data for this purpose as may be requested. The

Town reserves the right to inspect Offeror's physical facilities prior to award to satisfy questions regarding the Offeror's capabilities. The Town further reserves the right to reject any proposal if the evidence submitted by, or investigations of, the Offeror fails to satisfy the Town that such bidder is properly qualified to carry out the obligations of the contract.

Upon award of a contract, it shall not be assignable by the Offeror, in whole or in part, without the written consent of the Town.

Changes to any contract resulting from this RFQ/P can be made in any of the following ways:

- a) The parties may agree in writing to modify the scope of the contract. An increase or decrease in the price of the contract resulting from such modification shall be agreed to by the parties as a part of their written agreement to modify the scope of the contract.
- b) The Town may order changes within the general scope of the contract at any time by written notice to the contractor. Changes within the scope of the contract include, but are not limited to, things such as services to be performed, the method of packing of shipment, and the place of delivery or installation. The contractor shall comply with the notice upon receipt. The contractor shall be compensated for any additional costs incurred as the result of such order and shall give the Town a credit for any savings. Compensation shall be determined by one of the following methods:
 1. By mutual agreement between the parties in writing; or
 2. By agreeing upon a unit price or using a unit price set forth in the contract; or
 3. By ordering the contractor to proceed with the work and keep a record of all costs incurred and savings realized. A markup for overhead and profit may be allowed if provided by the contract. The same markup shall be used for determining a decrease in price as the result of savings realized. The contractor shall present the Town with all vouchers and records of expenses incurred and savings realized.

The Town reserves the right to reject any or all bids or proposals, in whole or in part, to make separate awards, to waive informalities and to delete items prior to making the award, whenever it is deemed in the sole opinion of the Town to be in its best interest. Due consideration will be given to price, previous experience, and the ability of the Offeror to render required services. The Town also reserves the right to conduct any tests it may deem advisable and to make all evaluations.

Insurance Requirements:

- a) Indemnification - The Offeror agrees, to the fullest extent of the law, to indemnify and hold the Town harmless from and against all losses, damages, injuries, claims and demands whatsoever, regardless of the case thereof, and expenses in connection therewith, including reasonable counsel fees arising out of or incidental to the performance of the Offeror's duties and responsibilities under any agreement that results from this request for proposals. This covenant of indemnity shall continue notwithstanding any revocation or termination of any

agreement that results from this request for proposals. The Offeror shall be given prompt notice of any claims, demands or causes of action, and reasonable opportunity to defend the same.

- b) Insurance - The Offeror shall secure and keep in force, at its sole cost and expense, the following insurance policies which shall be in form and content satisfactory to the Town, and shall be issued by insurance companies qualified to do business in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Property Damage and Liability Insurance - Policy of property damage and public liability insurance which shall protect the Town and such other persons as the Town shall designate against any liability imposed by law upon the Town, the Offeror, or both. Coverage shall include damages for loss of or damages to property, or for bodily injuries, including death suffered or claimed by reason or in consequence of any act or omission of any act by an employee or agent of the Offeror. Such insurance shall be on a comprehensive General Liability form with limits of \$1,000,000 each occurrence, \$1,000,000 aggregate and bodily injury liability to include: premises operations products, complete operations, contractual and broad form property damage.

Worker's Compensation and Other Insurance - The Offeror shall carry such Worker's Compensation Insurance and other insurance on its employees and agent performing services under this contract, as is required by the Code of Virginia.

- c) Upon award, the Offeror shall provide the Town with a certificate of insurance. Policy coverage shall be maintained during the entire term of the contract.

Cancellation of Contract:

The Town reserves the right to cancel any resulting contract, in part or in whole, without penalty, upon 30 days written notice to the Offeror. Any contract cancellation notice shall not relieve the Offeror of the obligation to deliver and/or perform on all outstanding orders prior to the date of cancellation.

Availability of Funds:

Agreements are made subject to the appropriation of funds by the Altavista Town Council and are null and void in the event of non-appropriation by the Town Council. Non-appropriation of funds shall not be deemed a cancellation and shall terminate this agreement without recourse and with no liability on the part of the Town.

Drug-Free Workplace

During the performance of this contract, the contractor agrees to (i) provide a drug-free workplace for the contractor's employees; (ii) post in conspicuous places, available to employees and applicants for employment, a statement notifying employees that the unlawful manufacture, sale, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance or marijuana is prohibited in the contractor's workplace and specifying the actions that will be taken against the employees for violations of such prohibition; (iii) state in all solicitations or advertisements for employees placed by or on behalf of the contractor that the contractor maintains a drug-free workplace; and (iv) include the provisions of the foregoing clauses in every subcontract or purchase order of over \$10,000, so that the provisions will be binding upon each subcontractor or vendor.

Safety and OSHA Standards

All parties performing services for the Town shall comply with all Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), State Occupational Health Standards, and any other applicable rules and regulations. All parties shall be held responsible for the training, supervision, and safety of their employees. Any unsafe acts or hazardous conditions that may cause injury or damage to any persons or property within and around the work site areas under this contract shall be remedied per the regulatory agency guidelines.

Cooperative Procurement

This procurement is being conducted on behalf of other public bodies, in accordance with 2.2-4304 (A) of the Code of VA. The successful bidder has the option to provide these same items (services), except, architectural and engineering services, at the same prices, awarded as a result of this solicitation to any public body within the Commonwealth of Virginia. If any other public body decides to use the final contract, the contractor(s) must deal directly with that public body concerning the placement of orders, issuance of the purchase orders, contractual disputes, invoicing and payment. Failure to extend a contract to a public body will have no effect on consideration of your bid.

End of RFQ/P