

# MAPA On-Call Communications Support Request for Proposals (RFP)

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October 4, 2018

Omaha-Council Bluffs Metropolitan Area Planning Agency



Proposals should be submitted

by **4:30 p.m. CDT** on

**October 25, 2018**

## 1. Introduction

The Omaha-Council Bluffs Metropolitan Area Planning Agency (MAPA) is issuing a Request for Proposal (RFP) for Communications Support from qualified firms with experience in communications strategy, content development, and execution. Qualified firms are invited to submit a proposal with a statement of qualifications as outlined below. The MAPA website referred to in this document is located at <http://mapacog.org/projects/rfpsrfqs/>.

MAPA is a regional Council of Governments serving Douglas, Sarpy and Washington Counties in Nebraska and Mills and Pottawattamie Counties in Iowa. MAPA brings together local and regional officials together with citizens to connect, plan and thrive. MAPA serves as the federally-mandated [Metropolitan Planning Organization \(MPO\) for a smaller region](#), and is charged to administer the “3C” (cooperative, comprehensive and continuing) transportation planning process within that area.

All consultants interested in doing work for MAPA are encouraged more strongly to review the Nebraska Department of Transportation’s (NDOT) template task order agreement, template standard Master Indefinite Delivery/Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) agreement and IDIQ Ordering Procedures prior to responding to any RFP. These documents can be found on [NDOT’s website](#). Federal-aid funds will be used on individual task orders and all rules and procedures in the Local Public Agencies (LPA) Guidelines Manual must be followed.

MAPA is seeking expressions of interest from communications/public relations firms who wish to be considered to provide support to MAPA by developing a communications strategy, providing content and design assistance for MAPA projects as needed. MAPA’s Heartland 2050 regional vision is undertaking a refresh that is described further below. Additional planning efforts are ongoing and may require outside assistance. MAPA is looking for visual and relatable communications that engage stakeholders and the general public about their importance and relevance to the present and future community.

This Request for Proposal does not commit MAPA to award a contract, to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a proposal for this request, or to procure or contract for services. MAPA reserves the right to award contracts to more than one qualified firm, to accept or reject any or all proposals received as a result of this request, to negotiate with any qualified firm or to modify or cancel in part or in its entirety the Request for Proposal, if it is in the best interest of MAPA to do so.

## 2. Indefinite Delivery / Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) Process

It is anticipated that a minimum of one (1) consultant will be awarded a contract under the Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) or "on-call" procurement process. This would be a proposed two-year contract with an optional two-year renewable term. For planning purposes, it is anticipated that the initial work toward Heartland 2050 will have a minimum value of \$15,000 and a maximum value of \$50,000, although MAPA reserves the right to issue a task order for a different amount. Future task orders may be requested. As of the date of this RFP it is unknown if there will be future task orders, how many will be issued, or what value the task orders will have. Individual Task Orders may be Cost Plus Fixed Fee or Lump Sum contracts.

MAPA reserves the right to abandon or terminate any contract at any time and either re-advertise services or utilize its own staff. MAPA also reserves the right to accomplish services for future phases on all the above projects with the selected consultant, by selecting another consultant, or utilizing its own forces.

### **3. Anticipated Initial Task Order: Heartland 2050 Refresh**

The anticipated initial task order(s) will support the Heartland 2050 Refresh. A more detailed task order will be provided, but this is intended to provide background into the type of work that can be anticipated.

Heartland 2050 is MAPA's regional vision a community driven initiative pulling in stakeholders from across the region to think big and work towards a common vision for the five-county MAPA region (Douglas, Sarpy and Washington Counties in Nebraska and Mills and Pottawattamie Counties in Iowa). The Heartland 2050 signature initiative is "Close the Gap," an integrated approach to land use and transit that concentrates growth based on existing development in our region. More information on Close the Gap can be found at: <http://heartland2050.org/vision/what-were-doing/>.

Heartland 2050 was reorganized earlier this year. The previous Executive Committee was disbanded and a newly formed "Heartland 2050 Regional Planning Advisory Committee" (RPAC), which is incorporated more fully into MAPA's organizational structure, held its first meeting on August 3, 2018. The RPAC reports directly to the MAPA Board, which is comprised of mayors and county commissioners and supervisors from the MAPA region.

During the latter half of 2018, Heartland 2050 is undertaking a refresh." The existing goals, strategies and action plan are being updated to refocus and and articulate more clearly articulate the project's scope. It is critical that Heartland 2050's refresh is coordinated closely with other major planning efforts, including those led by the Greater Omaha Chamber, MAPA, and other local agencies. This initial task order will likely entail assisting MAPA and our stakeholders to develop content, materials and a strategy to communicate these revised goals, strategies and action plan in a clear and compelling manner.

The consultant will support this effort through:

- Project understanding and information gathering
- Communications strategy support
- Development and/or refinement of Heartland 2050 message, copy and brand voice
- Selection of media formats
- Design and visual representation of project information

MAPA anticipates that this effort will be collaborative between the consulting firm and our staff members that work on communications, community outreach and graphic design.

It is to be determined whether there will be additional task orders beyond the Heartland 2050 refresh effort. MAPA will evaluate its work on an ongoing basis and determine if more task orders are needed.

## 4. Anticipated Future Task Orders

Beyond the initial task order for the Heartland 2050 refresh, there may be additional task orders over the term of the IDIQ contract. These task orders would be for communications and design assistance for MAPA's planning efforts that may include the following tasks:

- Development of communications strategy
- Development of written content for agency or project specific materials
- Visual representation and design for MAPA projects
- Development of branding and branding guides for MAPA projects
- Website improvements for MAPA's website (mapacog.org) or project websites, such as Heartland 2050 ([heartland2050.org](http://heartland2050.org))
- Video development
- Social media assistance
- Other communications-related tasks as requested

Future communications work could arise from MAPA's work related to transportation and data, community and economic development, which includes new work in the area of housing, or Heartland 2050. The nature of specific future task orders, or whether there will be additional task orders, remains uncertain as of the date of this RFP.

## 5. Project Schedule

The anticipated project schedule is listed below. Interviews are not required for this selection, but may be requested if necessary. The evaluation criterion to be used for the short-listing and final selection is outlined below. The anticipated project schedule is listed below.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Date</b>
RFP released	October 4, 2018
Deadline for written questions to be submitted	October 17, 2018
Responses to written questions posted	October 19, 2018
Deadline for submittals	October 25, 2018 at 4:30 p.m.
Interviews (if necessary)	November 1, 2018
Latest day for consultant selection	November 2, 2018
Scope and fee negotiation finalized	November 13, 2018

Finance Committee Approval	November 28, 2018
MAPA Board Approval	December 6, 2018
Project Start Date	December 7, 2018
Contract End Date	December 31, 2020
Optional Two Year Contract Renewal	January 2021 - December 2022

## 6. Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation and selection of the winning proposal will be based on the qualifications of the responding firm. A consultant evaluation team made up of representatives from MAPA will screen the proposals to ensure they meet the minimum requirements of the proposal format, review and score the proposals. Factors that will be considered by the selection team include the following:

Criteria	Points
1. Qualifications and experience of the firm, including reference checks, achievements, and financial stability	25
2. Qualifications and experience of principal consulting staff proposed to work on the project	25
3. Proposed project approach and schedule	40
4. Availability and qualifications of subcontractor staff	5
5. Ability of the firm to integrate the study into present workload	5
<b>Total Points</b>	100

## 7. Submission of Proposals

Three (3) printed copies and one electronic version (PDF preferred) of the proposal must be received in the MAPA offices by **4:30 PM CDT on October 25, 2018**. Proposals may not exceed 12 pages in length, including appendices and/or supplementary exhibits. A table of contents will not be counted toward the page limit when included in proposals. Proposals must include proof of insurance and compliance with

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act.

The Issuing Officer, identified below, is the sole point of contact regarding the RFP from the date of issuance until selection of the successful vendor.

Karna Loewenstein  
Metropolitan Area Planning Agency  
2222 Cuming Street  
Omaha, NE 68102  
[kloewenstein@mapacog.org](mailto:kloewenstein@mapacog.org)

From the issue date of this RFP until announcement of the successful vendor, vendors may contact only the Issuing Officer regarding this RFP. Vendors may be disqualified if they contact any employee or representative of MAPA other than the Issuing Officer regarding this RFP. Questions only about the procurement process will be accepted by MAPA; all of these must be submitted in writing to the Issuing Officer by October 17, 2018. Answers to all questions will be posted on the MAPA website on October 19, 2018. Firms whose proposals are not accepted will be notified as soon as the selected firm has been approved and a contract has been negotiated.

## 8. Submittal Requirements

The proposal shall include the following items and be organized in the manner specified below.

*A. Letter of Interest*

The proposal shall include a letter of interest outlining briefly the firm's understanding of the work, as well as a general statement introducing the firm and individuals to be involved.

*B. Firm Profile & Qualifications*

The proposal shall include general information about the firm, the firm's area of expertise, and the firm's official name and address. Additionally, the proposal shall furnish the following qualifications to be considered for award of the contract:

1. Name of the anticipated project manager and his or her relevant qualifications and experience on similar projects, along with those of key personnel who will be involved with the project.
2. If the project includes multiple team members, an organizational chart including team members shall be included
3. Experience of the firm in performing similar work and examples of this work.
4. Explanation of ability to integrate the Heartland 2050 work into the present and anticipated workload of each key team member for winter and spring 2018-2019.

*C. Project Approach and Scope of Work*

A description of the Consultant's approach to the project and the anticipated body of work described in the RFP.

*D. Systems of Award Management (SAM) Registration*

Documentation that applicant firm has current SAM registration or that registration has been initiated. Registration information can be found at <https://www.sam.gov/portal/SAM>.

*E. Certificate of insurance*

The Contractor shall provide a current Certificate of Insurance/Acord Form (COI) verifying the coverage and maintain insurance throughout the term of the contract. If contractor subcontracts any portion of the Contract the Contractor must provide equivalent insurance for each subcontractor and provide a COI verifying the coverage of the contractor or require the contractor to have equivalent insurance and provide written notice to MAPA that the each subcontractor has verified required coverage.

## **9. Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) Policy**

The Omaha –Council Bluffs Metropolitan Area Planning Agency (MAPA) has established a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program in accordance with regulations of the U.S Department of Transportation (DOT), 49 CFR Part 26. MAPA has received Federal Financial assistance from the Department of Transportation, and as a condition of receiving this assistance, MAPA has signed an assurance that it will comply with 49 CFR Part 26.

It is the policy of MAPA to ensure that DBEs, as defined in part 26, have an equal opportunity to receive and participate in DOT-assisted contracts. It is also our policy:

1. To ensure nondiscrimination in the award and administration of DOT assisted contracts;
2. To create a level playing field on which DBEs can compete fairly for DOT assisted contracts;
3. To ensure that the DBE Program is tailored narrowly in accordance with applicable law;
4. To ensure that only firms that meet 49 CFR Part 26 eligibility standards fully are permitted to participate as DBEs;
5. To help remove barriers to the participation of DBEs in DOT assisted contracts;
6. To assist the development of firms that can compete successfully in the market place outside the DBE Program.

The following assurance is to be included on all DOT-assisted contracts:

“The contractor, subrecipient or subcontractor shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, or sex in the performance of this contract. The contractor shall carry out applicable requirements of 49 CFR part 26 in the award and administration of DOT-assisted contracts. Failure by the contractor to carry out these requirements is a material breach of this contract, which may result in the termination of this contract, or such other remedy as the recipient deems appropriate.”

## 10. General Terms and Conditions

1. **Conflicts of Interest** – The proposer shall disclose any known or potential conflicts of interest with MAPA and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The proposer must declare that the proposer is not currently, and will not during the performance of any services for MAPA, participate in any other work involving a third party with interests in conflict currently or likely to be in conflict with MAPA’s interests without MAPA’s approval. All sub-consultants must submit a conflict of interest form as well.
2. **SAM Registration**-All prospective consulting firms must be listed in the U.S. Federal Contractor Registration database known as SAM (System for Award Management) to be considered for this project.
3. **Amendments to the RFP** – MAPA reserves the right to amend or cancel any or all parts of this RFP. Revisions to the RFP shall be posted on the MAPA website at least three (3) full business days prior to the deadline for submittal of responses.
4. **Non-commitment of MAPA** – This RFP does not commit MAPA to award a contract, to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a response to this request, or to procure or contract for services.
5. **Confidentiality** – Before award of the contract, all responses to this RFP will be designated confidential to the extent permitted by the Nebraska Public Records Law (84-712). After award of the contract (or if not awarded, after rejection of all responses), all responses will be regarded as public records and will be subject to review by the public. Any language purporting to render all or portions of the responses confidential will be regarded as non-effective and will be disregarded.
6. **Access to Records and Reports** – The proposer acknowledges the selected consultant firm will give MAPA, NDOR, FHWA, and the Comptroller General of the United States access to any books, documents, papers and records of the consultant firm which pertain directly to the contract for the purposes of making audits, examinations, excerpts, and transcriptions. Related contractual documents will be maintained for no less than three years after the date of termination or expiration of the contract.
7. **Termination** – MAPA will retain the right to terminate the contract for convenience or default. These clauses will be incorporated into the contract with the selected consultant firm.

8. **Civil Rights** – MAPA is in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, as amended, section 303 of the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, section 202 of the Americans with Disabilities act of 1990, and Federal transit law. Thus, clauses relating to nondiscrimination and equal employment opportunity (race, color, creed, national origin, sex, and disabilities) will be included in the contract with the selected consultant firm.
  
9. **Drug Free Workplace** – MAPA has established and maintains drug-free workplace policies. The selected consultant firm and all sub-consultants must have established and maintain drug-free workplace policies as well, such as those set forth in the Federal Drug Free Workplace Act of 1988.

## **11. Award of Contract**

MAPA reserves the right to negotiate with the selected firm on matters related to project cost, or technical or other considerations that arise following announcement of the award of the contract. A decision to contract with the selected firm will be made by the MAPA Board of Directors following a recommendation by MAPA staff. Subject to selection and successful negotiation, MAPA intends to sign a contract on or about December 7, 2018 with the objective of the selected firm beginning work in December 2018 and concluding the work on or about December 31, 2020, with the ability to renew for two successive years.