

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Georgia Mountains Regional Commission Workforce Development Plan

The Georgia Mountains Regional Commission (GMRC) serves the following 13 counties: Banks, Dawson, Forsyth, Franklin, Habersham, Hall, Hart, Lumpkin, Rabun, Stephens, Towns, Union, and White and 38 municipalities within these counties. The Georgia Mountains Regional Commission Workforce Development Area 2 serves as a department under the direction of the GMRC.

The Georgia Mountains Region has a diversified economic base in both domestic and international markets. There are many economic drivers in our region, including agricultural, automotive, industrial manufacturing, healthcare, tourism and asset based development, and educational sectors, which provide a stable business climate and environment. All of these factors enhance the quality of life and make the Georgia Mountains Region an ideal place to live and work.

The GMRC is seeking proposals from Consultants or teams of Consultants experienced in workforce development and strategic planning to support the Area 2 Workforce Board in preparing an Area 2 Regional Workforce Development Plan. (here-after called the Plan)

The Plan will be prepared and developed in accordance with the requirements stipulated in the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA). This document will serve as the essential planning document to guide the region's workforce development initiatives within the 13 County Area 2. The Scope of Service for the work is attached as Exhibit A and provides information regarding the level of effort required as well as specific tasks to be accomplished.

GMRC intends to award a contract for work during calendar year 2016. Interested firms should submit a proposal that addresses the factors listed below and the scope of services in Exhibit A. The Consultant must provide a detailed breakdown of the proposed budget in the format of Exhibits B and B-1. GMRC is the lead agency for this RFP and the selected Consultant will enter into a contract with GMRC.

GMRC anticipates that a contract will be awarded in May 2016. The contract term of performance will extend through December 31, 2016; however, all work activities must be completed by July 29, 2016 unless otherwise extended based on additional guidance or regulatory decisions provided by the State and as approved by GMRC. The successful firm or team of firms should be prepared to begin work immediately. GMRC reserves the right to award all, part, or none of the available funds for this project.

Proposals must include the following information:

1. Name of lead firm and any sub-consultants.
2. Point of contact (name, title, phone number, mailing address, and email address) at lead firm
3. Qualifications and technical competence of consultant\or sub-consultants in the type of work required.
4. Description of experience with similar projects including a list of at least three references within the past five years, with current contact information.
5. Listing of key project personnel and their qualifications. Include resume for lead staff.
6. Geographic location of the consultant's office performing the work. Preference will be given to consultants for the physical presence in the GMRC 13 county region.
7. A detailed description of the technical approach proposed for accomplishment of the work described in Exhibit A.
8. A proposed schedule and work plan for the accomplishment of the work described in Exhibit A.
9. A proposed project budget in the format of Exhibits B and B-1 to this RFP, including a budget narrative.
10. Any other pertinent information.

The review of written proposals will be scored on the following evaluation criteria with the relative weights in parentheses:

1. Related experience, qualifications and references of the firm or project team (30%)
2. Technical approach (30%)
3. Work plan and schedule (20%)
Note: this includes the consultants' ability to demonstrate a balanced workload for its staff in order to carry out its responsibilities to GMRC in balance with any other contracts the consultants may have.
4. Proposed budget (20%)

GMRC reserves the right to request additional information from the proposing firms to clarify information submitted in the proposal.

Additional information should not be required to respond to this RFP. Technical questions should be submitted in writing to John Phillips no later than 5:00 PM on May 9, 2016. Written questions should be mailed to the address provided below or submitted by email to djackson@gmrc.ga.gov. All questions received, and responses to those questions, will be posted on the GMRC website by 5:00 PM on May 16, 2016.

GMRC must receive three (3) hardcopies and one (1) copy of a digital format, either in Microsoft Word or PDF format no later than **12:00PM ET on Friday, May 20, 2016.**

Proposal shall not exceed a total of 10 pages (8.5x11), inclusive of resume and firm experience. Covers, end sheets, and an introductory letter will not count against this page maximum. Font size shall be a minimum of 11 point in all cases.

Proposals must be submitted to the following address:

Georgia Mountains Regional Commission
Attention: Workforce Development RFP Plan Proposal
P.O. Box 1720
Gainesville, GA 30503

GMRC reserves the right to award this contract based on initial proposals received without formal interviews.

EXHIBIT A

SCOPE OF SERVICES

- I. **General:** The work to be accomplished by the Consultant(s) is in support of the following GMRC work program component

Georgia Mountains Workforce Development Comprehensive Plan

- II. **Background and the Objectives:** The Consultant shall perform all the necessary services provided under this contract within the Georgia Mountains Regional Commission Workforce Development Area 2.

The Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) provides designated regions and local workforce areas the responsibility and opportunity to develop employment and training systems tailored specifically to the regional economies. These systems must meet the needs of the full range of learners and workers, including those with barriers to employment. The system must also address the specific needs of regional employers and the skills they require. WIOA requires the Local Board to submit a local plan to the Governor. The local or regional plan provides the framework for local areas to define how their workforce development systems will achieve the purposes of WIOA. The regional or local plans serve as a 4-year action plans to develop, align, and integrate the region and the local area's job driven workforce development systems, and provides the platform to achieve the local area's visions and strategic and operational goals. Since the local plan is only as effective as the partnerships they operationalize, it must represent a collaborative process among local elected officials, boards, and required partners (including economic development, education, and private sector partners) to create a shared understanding of the local area's workforce investment needs, a shared vision of how the workforce investment system can be designed to meet those needs, and agreement on the key strategies to realize this vision.

The Georgia Department of Economic Development-Workforce Division is developing guidance on the creation of local and regional workforce plans. Interested Consultants should familiarize themselves with this guidance and all referenced regulations in order to adequately propose a plan and approach to meet this guidance. WIG PS-15-008: *Preliminary Local and Regional Plan Guidance* (<http://www.georgia.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/WIGS-15-00S.pdf>) references sections of the WIOA, NPRM, and the Proposed Georgia Unified Plan relevant to local and regional planning.

- III. **Work Tasks:** Specific deliverables which must be provided are identified, but Consultants may propose additional deliverables that contribute to the

successful completion of the project and meet overall project objectives. Consultants must describe in their proposals how they will incorporate user-friendly graphics into all deliverables.

Task 1- Project Management and Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Immediately upon receipt of a notice to proceed, the Consultant(s) will develop both a Project Management Plan and Stakeholder Engagement Plan. The Project Management Plan will include schedules and deliverables for task- including time frames for review. The Project Management Plan will also include draft outlines for deliverable documents, including data collection strategies, for review and approval.

The Stakeholder Engagement Plan will identify key stakeholders from partner agencies, local governments, citizens, the business community, and advocacy groups to include in the process. Consultant(s) shall identify how they propose to engage and incorporate feedback and input from the required stakeholders and strategic partners. Creative and cost-effective engagement strategies will be required. Consultant(s) must include in their proposals recommended engagement strategies to maximize participation from a diverse array of public and private sector stakeholders.

In order to ensure transparency to the public, WIOA and the related NPRM include references to public input. These references include, but are not limited, to the following:

- In addressing these planning requirements, boards engage strategic partners to develop and implement regionally aligned workforce development priorities and streamlined service delivery. Local Board shall make the local plan available for comment (a minimum of 30 days public comment) before submitting the plan to the Governor.
- All affected entities and the public shall have an opportunity to provide input to inform plan development. The public comment process is to be consistent with the "sunshine provisions" and the Local Board must make the plan available through electronic means and in open meetings.

The stakeholder engagement plan must address the intent of the WIOA law in specific references related to public input and stakeholder engagement.

Deliverables

- Project Management Plan (draft and final)
- Stakeholder Engagement Plan (draft and final)

Task 2- Regional Workforce Analysis

The plan must include a regional workforce analysis upon which the remainder of the plan is based. Required elements of this workforce analysis are detailed in WIOA. The Consultant shall develop a workforce analysis section that includes, at a minimum, the items listed below (A through F). Additional items may be included that support the workforce analysis section.

The GMRC will provide the minimum required data tables for items listed in A, B, and C below. Data will primarily be derived from Burning Glass and other state sources. It is not anticipated that the Consultant will need to purchase additional data sources to complete this section. The data provided by GMRC to the Consultant is required to provide additional narrative and analysis, along with consistent formatting.

GMRC will provide a narrative to D, E, and F below.

- A. Analysis of the regional economic conditions
 - existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations
 - the employment needs of employers in those industry sectors and occupations
- B. Analysis of the knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of the employers in the region, including employment needs in-demand industry sectors and occupations;
- C. Analysis of the workforce in the region
 - current labor force employment and unemployment data
 - information on labor market trends
 - educational and skills levels of the workforce in the region, including individuals with barriers to employment
- D. Analysis of the workforce development activities (including education and training) in the region
 - an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of such services
 - the capacity to provide such services, to address the identified education and skill needs of the workforce and the employment needs of employers in the region
- E. Description of Local Board's strategic vision and goals for preparing educated and skilled workforce
 - includes goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance in order to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency
- F. Strategy to work with entities that carry out the core programs to align resources available to the local area in order to achieve the strategic vision and goals.

Deliverables

- Instruments for gathering additional input
- Regional Workforce Analysis Report (draft and final)

Task 3– Local Workforce Area Plan

Required elements of the local workforce plan are detailed in WIOA and are listed below as items 2 through 22. These requirements set the foundation for WIOA principles by fostering strategic alignment, improving service integration, and ensuring that the workforce system is industry-relevant, responding to the economic needs of the local workforce development area and matching employers with skilled workers.

Local plan elements (note that plan elements below begin with #2 since the Regional Workforce Analysis in Task 2 above is considered element #1; this numbering is consistent with WIOA)

- 2- Description of the Workforce Development System and how the local Board will work with entities carrying out core programs and other workforce development programs to support alignment to provide services;
- 3- Description of how the local Board, working with the entities carrying out core programs, will expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals;
- 4- Description of the strategies and services that will be used in the local area:
 - a. In order to-
 - facilitate engagement of employers, including small employers and employers within in-demand industry sectors and occupations, in workforce development programs;
 - support local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area;
 - better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development; and
 - strengthen the linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs;
 - b. That may include the implementation of initiatives such as incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives, utilization of affected business intermediaries, and other business services and strategies, designed to meet the needs of employers

- 5- Description of how the local Board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with economic development activities carried out in the region
- 6- Description of the one-stop delivery system in the local area, including:
 - a. A description of how the local Board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers, and workers and job seekers;
 - b. a description of how the local Board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and through other means;
 - c. a description of how entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operator's and the one-stop partners, will comply with applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990;
 - d. a description of the roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners
- 7- Description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area
- 8- Description of how the local Board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities
- 9- Description assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce development activities in the local area, including activities for youth who are individuals with disabilities
- 10- Description of how the local Board will coordinate education and workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services
- 11- Description of how the local Board will coordinate workforce investment activities in the local area with the provision of transportation, including public transportation, and other appropriate supportive services in the local area
- 12- Description of plans and strategies for, and assurances concerning, maximizing coordination of services provided by the State employment service under the Wagner-Peyser Act and services provided in the local area through the one-stop delivery system to improve service delivery and avoid duplication of services

- 13- Description of how the local Board will coordinate workforce development activities with the provision of adult education and literacy activities
- 14- Description of the replicated cooperative agreements between the local Board or other local entities with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities
- 15- Identification of the entity responsible for the dispersal of grant funds as determined by the chief elected official or the Governor
- 16- Description of the competitive process to be used to award sub-grants and contracts in the local area for activities carried out under this title
- 17- Description of the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and chief elected official
- 18- Description of the actions the local Board will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performing board
- 19- Description of how training services will be provided and how the use of such contracts will be coordinated with the use of individual training accounts and how the local Board will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs
- 20- Description of the process used by the local Board to provide an opportunity for public comment, including comment by representatives of business and comment by representatives of labor organizations, and input into the development of the local plan, prior to submission of the plan
- 21- Description of how one-stop centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information
- 22- Such other information as the Governor may require.

Deliverables

- Instruments for gathering input

Task 4- Regional Plan Assurances

In addition to delineating specific elements of the regional workforce analysis and local workforce plan, WIOA identified the following eight elements that should be the result of a regional planning process. These items may be addressed in various sections throughout the regional workforce plan document, but shall also be referenced and further discussed in this Regional Plan

Assurances section. Some of the assurances may require additional input from the local Workforce Board and their staff.

The Consultant shall prepare a response to each of the below items based on the results in preparing the regional workforce plan. To gain additional input, the Consultant shall conduct discussion with the local Workforce Board of Directors (and designated staff). Additional input may be required; the Consultant shall develop additional strategies as needed to complete input needed to fully answer the below items:

1. the preparation of a regional plan;
2. the establishment of regional service strategies;
3. the development and implementation of sector initiatives for in-demand industry sectors or occupations for the region;
4. the collection and analysis of regional labor market data;
5. the establishment of administrative cost of arrangements, including the pooling of fines for administrative costs, as appropriate for the region;
6. the coordination of transportation and other supportive services, as appropriate, for the region;
7. the coordination of services with regional economic development services and providers; and
8. the establishment of an agreement concerning how the planning region will collectively negotiate and reach agreement with the Governor at local levels of performance for, and report on, the performance accountability measures for the local area.

Deliverables

- Facilitate discussion with the local workforce board director and designated staff
- Area Assurances Report

IV. Project Target Dates: The Georgia Department of Economic Development-Workforce Division has yet to provide a firm date for plan submittal, but it is anticipated that local workforce development plans will be due by July 30, 2016. The below project target dates identify key work activities and anticipated timeframe for their completion in order to meet a August 1, 2016 plan submittal. These dates may be amended based on additional guidance from the State for the plan submittal process, and as approved by GMRC.

February- April	Data Collection (GMRC)
May- July	Local Workforce Plans Development
August	Public Comment

July-August	Final Plan Development and Local Approval Process
August 31	Plan Complete and Submitted to State
Sept. - December	Make corrections or other plan changes based on comments received from the State's Review Process

EXHIBIT.B
Proposed Project
Budget

Please ensure that all costs are within reason and are allowable under 2CFR Part 200 Uniform Administrative Requirement, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.

	<u>Estimated Hours</u>	<u>Rate/Hour</u>	<u>Total Est. Cost</u>
1. <u>Direct Labor</u> (List by position all professional Personnel participating in Project) Total Direct Labor			\$ _____
2. <u>Overhead Cost</u> (Overhead percentage rate) (Total Direct Labor) Total Overhead			\$ _____
3. <u>Other Direct Costs</u> (List other items and basis for Computing cost for each. Examples include computer services, equipment, etc.) Total Other Direct Costs			\$ _____
4. <u>Subcontracts</u> (For each, list name, purpose and rate) Total Subcontracts			\$ _____
5. <u>Travel</u> a. Travel by common carrier from/to the local workforce offices. (List number of trips and Economy class airfare, plus taxi and shuttle fares, etc.) b. Travel by private automobile within the Georgia Mountains Workforce Region. (List # of days X rate) Total Travel			\$ _____
6. <u>Profit</u> (Percentage rate X basis) Total Profit			\$ _____
Total Estimate Cost and Profit			\$ _____

EXHIBIT B-1
Proposed Project Budget-By Task

TASK	AMOUNT
Task 1 – Project Management and Stakeholder Engagement Plan	
Task 2- Workforce Analysis	
Task 3 – Local Workforce Area Plan	
Task 4- Regional Plan Assurances	
TOTAL	

Include a *Budget Narrative* that briefly describes the costs detailed on each line item of Exhibit Band B-1. The budget narrative should not exceed two pages.