



FEBRUARY 12, 2015

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

**FAIRFIELD COUNTY
STRATEGIC COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
MASTER PLAN**

Due Date:

March 19, 2015 by 2:00 p.m.

Receipt Location:

**Central Midland Council of Governments
236 Stoneridge Drive
Columbia, SC 29210**

Official Contact:

Gregory Sprouse

Director of Research, Planning, and Development

(803)744-5158

gsprouse@cmcog.org

CONTENTS

- 1. Introduction 1
- 2. Request for Proposal (RFP) Process and Policies 1
- 3. Proposal Contents 5
- 4. Evaluation and Award Process 7
- 5. Selection Criteria 8
- 6. Scope of Services..... 9
- 7. Terms and conditions..... 13

1. INTRODUCTION

Central Midlands Council of Governments (CMCOG) is issuing this Request for Proposals (RFP) to identify a qualified consultant team to assist with the development of a strategic community and economic development master plan for Fairfield County, SC. The overall purpose of the master plan is to identify current and future community needs and to provide strategic policy, program, and project recommendations. In order to be comprehensive and inclusive in considering community needs, CMCOG and Fairfield County are envisioning a conceptual framework for this plan that will include the following three components:

- Community Master Plan
- Economic Development Plan
- Financial Plan

The community master plan will inventory individual community needs and assets, analyze growth and development trends, and examine key quality of life indicators. The economic development plan will provide a countywide and sector level competitiveness assessment, an inventory of education and workforce development needs, and a detailed market positioning strategy. The financial plan will provide a capital improvement program based on the strategic project recommendations from the other two components to include consideration of future revenue projections, financial management strategies, and a project implementation timeline. The entire planning process will be guided by a project advisory committee and conducted in the context of an inclusive public participation and stakeholder involvement program. The selected consultant team will be one that has demonstrated experience in all of these areas. This project will be funded by Fairfield County and administered by CMCOG.

2. REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) PROCESS AND POLICIES

2.1. Submittal of Proposals

Central Midlands Council of Governments (CMCOG) is hereby issuing this Request for Proposals (RFP) to firms that have the capability and interest in undertaking and performing the scope of work described in this RFP. The RFP will be publicly advertised and released in accordance with the CMCOG procurement policy. The official contact for this solicitation is:

Gregory Sprouse
Director of Research, Planning, and Development
Central Midlands Council of Governments
236 Stoneridge Drive
Columbia, SC 29210
Phone: (803) 744-5158
gsprouse@cmcog.org

Each firm responding to this solicitation is officially a RESPONDENT. Each RESPONDENT must submit a sealed proposal package containing an original and eight (8) copies plus one (1) digital copy of its proposal to Gregory Sprouse at the address above no later than **2:00 p.m. on March 19, 2015**. Proposals may be submitted in person, by messenger, or by regular mail. All proposals will be logged in and date and time stamped. **Any proposal package that is received after the date and time specified will be logged and date and time stamped as "late" and returned unopened to the RESPONDENT.**

2.2. Proposed Procurement Timeline

| | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Release date for RFP | February 12, 2015 |
| Final Date to Receive Written Questions/Clarifications | February 26, 2015 at 5:00 p.m. ET |
| RFP Closing Date | March 19, 2015 at 2:00 p.m. ET |
| Evaluation Committee Meeting | March 23 – April 3, 2015 |
| Evaluation Committee Recommendation | April 3, 2015 |
| Intent to Award Released | April 9, 2015 |

2.3. Labeling of Proposals

All proposals must be submitted in a sealed envelope or package plainly marked "Fairfield County Strategic Community and Economic Development Master Plan," ATTN: Gregory Sprouse, and name and address of the RESPONDENT in the upper left hand corner. No responsibility will attach to CMCOG or any official or employee thereof, for the pre-opening, post-opening, or failure to open a proposal not properly addressed and identified.

2.4. Questions/Requests for Clarification

All questions and/or requests for clarification regarding this RFP should be provided in writing to Gregory Sprouse no later than February 26, 2015 at 5:00 p.m. ET. All questions submitted and their answers will be posted on the CMCOG website at www.centralmidlands.org as an addendum to this RFP. No telephone inquiries will be accepted.

2.5. Addenda

If it becomes necessary to revise any part of this RFP, a written addendum will be issued. All addenda issued by CMCOG will become part of the official RFP and will be posted on the CMCOG website.

2.6. Contact Policy

No direct or indirect contact regarding this solicitation may be made with any representatives of Fairfield County Council, Administration, and staff. No direct or indirect contact regarding this solicitation may be made with any representatives of the CMCOG Board of Directors and staff other than the OFFICIAL CONTACT identified in this RFP. If such contact is made, CMCOG reserves the right to reject a proposal submitted by that RESPONDENT. All questions and/or requests for clarification must be provided in accordance with Section 2.4 of the RFP.

2.7. Acceptance and Rejection of Proposals

Any proposals that do not conform to the essential requirements of the RFP shall be rejected. CMCOG reserves the right to waive informalities and minor irregularities in submittals and reserves the sole right to determine what constitutes informalities and minor irregularities. CMCOG also reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received in response to this RFP and to negotiate separately with competing RESPONDENTS. CMCOG is not obligated to enter into any contract on the basis of any submittal in response to this RFP. The CMCOG reserves the right to request additional information from any firm submitting under this RFP if such information is necessary to further evaluate the firm's qualifications.

2.8. Rejection/Cancellation

CMCOG may cancel this RFP in whole or in part at any time if it is determined to be in the best interest of CMCOG or Fairfield County. CMCOG may reject any or all proposals in whole or in part if it is determined to be in the best interest of CMCOG or Fairfield County.

2.9. Conflict of Interest

RESPONDENTS shall promptly notify CMCOG in writing of all potential conflicts of interest for any prospective business association, interest, or other circumstance, which may influence or appear to influence the RESPONDENT'S judgment or quality of services being provided hereunder. Such written notification shall identify the prospective business association, interest, or circumstance, the nature of work that such a person may undertake, and request an opinion of CMCOG as to whether the association, interest, or circumstance would, in the opinion of CMCOG, constitute a conflict of interest. By submitting this proposal, the respondent certifies that it has no conflict of interest with any employee, agent, elected official or officer of the city or any other conflict as may be set forth herein.

2.10. Collusion

More than one proposal from an individual, firm partnership, corporation, association or related parties under the same or different names will not be considered. If CMCOG believes that collusion exists among RESPONDENTS, all proposals from the suspected firms will be rejected. "Related parties" means RESPONDENTS or the principals thereof, which have a direct or indirect ownership or profit sharing interest in another RESPONDENT.

RESPONDENTS shall comply with all local, state, and federal directives, orders, and laws as applicable to this RFP and any resulting contract.

By responding to this RFP, RESPONDENTS certify that the response is made without previous understanding, agreement, or connection with any person, firm or corporation making a proposal for the same item, and they certify the knowledge that this would constitute an illegal action.

2.11. Proprietary/Confidential Information

Trade secrets or proprietary information submitted by a CONSULTANT in connection with a procurement transaction shall not be subject to public disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act; however, the CONSULTANT must invoke the protections of this section prior to or upon submission of the data or other materials, and must identify the data or other materials to be protected and state reasons why protection is necessary. Disposition of material after award is made should be stated by the CONSULTANT. No information, materials or other documents relating to this procurement will be presented or made otherwise available to any other person, agency, or organization until after award.

All CONSULTANTS must visibly mark as "Confidential" each part of their proposal that they consider to contain proprietary information. All unmarked pages will be subject to release in accordance with the guidelines set forth under Chapter 4 of Title 30 (The Freedom of Information Act) South Carolina Code of Laws and Section 11-35-410 of the South Carolina Consolidated Procurement Code. Privileged and confidential information is defined as "information in specific detail not customarily released to the general public, the release of which might cause harm to the competitive position of the part supplying the information." The examples of such information provided in the statute includes: customer lists, design recommendations and identification of prospective problem areas under an RFP, design concepts to include methods and procedures, and biographical data on key employees of the CONSULTANT.

Evaluative documents pre-decisional in nature such as inter or intra-agency memoranda containing technical evaluations and recommendations are exempted so long as the contract award does not expressly adopt or incorporate the inter- or intra-agency memoranda reflecting the pre-decisional deliberations.

Marking the entire proposal confidential/proprietary is not in conformance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.

2.12. Disadvantaged Business Enterprise

It is the policy of the CMCOG and Fairfield County to ensure nondiscrimination in the award and administration of contracts and to use Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs) in all types of contracting and procurement activities according to State and Federal laws. To that end the CMCOG has established a DBE program in accordance with regulations of the United States Department of Transportation found in 49 CFR Part 26. Each CONSULTANT is encouraged to use certified DBEs to meet the tasks and milestones of this request.

To ensure compliance with the CMCOG DBE goals, please note that CMCOG will request a minimum participation goal of 10% for DBEs for this project. Please note that the following statement should be included in the proposal to denote the level of proposed DBE participation.

“We the (CONSULTANT) ensure to the fullest extent possible that at least _____% of all procurement made with funds provided under this project/plan/request will be made from organizations owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals, women, and historically black colleges and universities.”

3. PROPOSAL CONTENTS

RESPONDENTS interested in providing the services outlined in this RFP must prepare and submit a proposal that adheres to the following requirements:

3.1. Number of Pages

Proposals must not be more than the equivalent of 50 single sided 8 ½ by 11 inch pages in length (not counting the front and back covers of the proposal, section dividers that contain no information, and SF 330 forms).

3.2. Cover Letter

The response should contain a cover letter signed by a person who is authorized to commit the RESPONDENT to perform the work included in the proposal and should identify all sub-contractors, materials, and enclosures being forwarded in response to the RFP.

3.3. Consultant Qualifications

Provide relevant information about the consultant team to include the following:

- Name and contact information for the proposed project manager who will be the sole point of contact for CMCOG during day to day operations
- Organization/company overview as it relates to the requirements of the RFP

- Organization/company overview of all sub-contractors as it relates to the requirements of the RFP
- Number of years the organization has been providing the requested services with a brief description of recently performed projects that indicate the past performance and abilities of the proposed team. More detail on specific projects should be included in the references section.

3.4. Key Personnel

Provide a proposed project management structure that identifies the project manager and all personnel who will be assigned to work on this project, including a description of their abilities, qualifications, and experience. Include resumes and contact information for all key individuals (including sub-consultants) who will be completing a portion of the scope of work. This section must also include an organizational chart that depicts the proposed project management, personnel, and sub-consultant organizational structure.

3.5. Project Proposal

Provide a description of the project understanding and a detailed methodology and work plan to include a proposed list of required tasks and milestones to address the provided scope of work as well as any additional recommendations, options, or alternatives that should be taken into consideration by CMCOG.

3.6. Project Schedule

Provide a proposed project schedule that includes the key task activities, duration, milestones and deliverables that will complete the scope of work within the timeframe outlined in this RFP. This section must include a flow chart depicting key task activities and the sequence of their completion within the proposed timeframe.

3.7. Fee Schedule/Cost Proposal

Provide a detailed fee schedule or cost proposal by task for the services identified in the scope of services section of this proposal. Identify sub-tasks and the respective cost as necessary. ***The cost proposal must be submitted under separate, sealed cover, and must be clearly identified as such with the works "COST PROPOSAL" labeled on the front of the cost proposal package.***

3.8. References

Provide three (3) client references for recently performed, relevant projects within the last 5 years that indicate the past performances and abilities of the proposed team. Include a key client contact person for each project with their current daytime phone number and email address.

4. EVALUATION AND AWARD PROCESS

4.1. Selection Committee

CMCOG in conjunction with Fairfield County will conduct a formal selection process to determine the best qualified RESPONDENT. This process will include the formation of a selection committee and the appointment of other technical advisors as needed, to review all of the proposals and score them based on the established selection criteria outlined herein. This process may include two steps. The first step will involve an evaluation of the Respondent's technical proposal using the selection criteria outlined in Section 5 below. Second, the highest scoring technical proposals, up to three, may be invited to oral interviews. The selection of the RESPONDENT will be determined by the highest total technical and interview score from these two steps.

CMCOG reserves the right to contact a firm to obtain written clarification of information submitted in their proposal and to contact references to obtain information regarding performance reliability and integrity.

4.2. Notice of Award

Once the evaluation committee has made a recommendation to Fairfield County, and Fairfield County has approved such recommendation, a notice of "Intent to Award" will be posted on the CMCOG website. A notice will also be emailed to all RESPONDENTS informing them of the success, or lack thereof, of their proposal to receive an award.

4.3. Appeal Policy

RESPONDENTS dissatisfied with the decisions regarding contract award can appeal to CMCOG. The protest must be filed in writing by the authorized signatory official for the RESPONDENT addressed to Ben Mauldin, Executive Director, CMCOG within ten working days of the announcement of the "Intent to Award." Announcement of our "Intent to Award" will be posted on the CMCOG web site. The ten working days to file appeals will begin on the date the "Intent to Award" is posted on the web site. All RESPONDENTS are encouraged to review CMCOG'S website (www.centralmidlands.org) daily during the RFP evaluation period. CMCOG will not consider appeals from individuals or organizations that do not have standing to appeal nor from sub-contractors of RESPONDENTS. The signature of a party on an appeal document constitutes a certification by the signer that the signer has read the document and to the best of their knowledge, information, and belief and, after reasonable inquiry, it is well grounded in fact. It must be warranted by existing law or by a good faith argument, and that it is not submitted for any improper purpose such as to harass, limit competition, or cause unnecessary delay or needless increase in the cost of the procurement or the appeal. The cost of the appeal will be borne solely by the appealing organization or individual. CMCOG will issue a written decision in accordance with its contract appeals procedures. Frivolous appeals will not be addressed by CMCOG. The

decision of CMCOG is final. There will be no formal debriefing on CMCOG decisions on the appeal.

4.4. Contract Negotiations

After the close of the appeal period, if no appeals were received or successfully granted, the highest rated respondent identified in the “Intent to Award” will be invited to enter into contract negotiations with Fairfield County to finalize the scope of work, personnel, hours, hourly rates, use of sub-consultants, and other direct costs that will be required to complete the agreement between Fairfield County and the selected RESPONDENT. If an agreement cannot be reached with the top ranked firm, CMCOG will advise Fairfield County as to the next most responsive and qualified firm and the negotiation phase will be repeated. This process will continue until an agreement is reached with a qualified firm that can provide the required scope of services.

Fairfield County has and shall retain all such authority and responsibility for contact negotiations and award. Any contracts awarded as a result of this procurement process will be between the RESPONDENT and Fairfield County.

5. SELECTION CRITERIA

The selection criteria and the percentage of their importance in making the selection are:

STEP ONE:

5.1. Method of Approach (20%)

This refers to the technical soundness of the RESPONDENT’S stated approach to the project, the comprehensiveness of the proposed approach, and the techniques to be used.

5.2. Understanding the Purpose (15%)

A determination will be made of the RESPONDENT’S understanding of the project purpose and goals as presented in the RFP. Evaluation will be based on the data presented in the RESPONDENT’S proposal, and the approach and allocation of time on specific tasks. RESPONDENTS should feel free to suggest other requirements and problems that may have been overlooked.

5.3. Capability, Qualifications and Cooperative Work Experience (20%)

The ability of a prospective RESPONDENT will be evaluated under the terms of the RFP relative to having a staff with the qualifications needed to successfully complete the project. Qualifications of professional personnel assigned to the project, as specified in the proposal including Sub-consultants, will be measured by both education and experience, and with particular reference to experience on similar projects. The RESPONDENT’S professional and

project staff that work on the project must be the same staff that is identified in the proposal.

This criteria also covers the RESPONDENT'S experience working as a cooperative team with other consultants and public agencies. Qualifications of professionals assigned will be measured by past experience on past projects within a cooperative team environment. The RESPONDENT will provide specific examples of cooperative work experiences with contact references for the selection committee.

5.4. Originality and Innovativeness (15%)

This RFP generally outlines the key outcomes and products expected by the contract administrator. A key factor in the selection of the firm is any innovative approach to the study that goes beyond the suggested Scope of Work, either in data gathering, data analysis, public participation, etc. It must be shown how this will be accomplished within the time limits.

5.5. Cost Proposal (10%)

Points for cost will be assigned by the procurement officer and will not be subject to review by the evaluation committee. The lowest cost proposal will receive the maximum points allowed and all other RESPONDENTS will be assigned points on a pro rata basis.

STEP TWO (CMCOG reserves the right not to include this activity)

5.6. Oral Presentations (20%)

RESPONDENTS who submit a proposal may be requested to make an oral presentation of their proposal. The highest scoring technical proposals, up to three, may be invited to oral interviews. This presentation, if held, will provide an opportunity for the RESPONDENT to clarify their proposal. Notice for oral presentations, if held, will be provided by CMCOG.

6. SCOPE OF SERVICES

Task 1: Project Advisory Committee

The consultant team will work in conjunction with CMCOG and Fairfield County to establish a Project Advisory Committee (PAC) to help guide the planning process. The PAC will be inclusive and represent a wide cross-section of stakeholders who can provide guidance on specific community needs, issues, and opportunities. It is anticipated that the PAC will be involved at key stages throughout the study and will provide a preliminary review of analysis, assessment, and outreach results as well as help guide policy and project recommendations. The total number of PAC meetings will be determined by CMCOG, Fairfield County, and the consultant team during the negotiation process.

Task 1 Key Activities:

1.1. Establish PAC

1.2. Schedule, prepare for, and hold PAC meetings

1.3. Prepare Meeting Minutes and Incorporate PAC Recommendations

Task 2: Public/Community Input

The consultant team will be responsible for developing a community outreach plan (COP) that will lay out an approach for citizen and stakeholder engagement in the planning process. The COP will include a comprehensive stakeholder database of non-governmental entities, civic/community organizations, church groups, business leaders, education and workforce representatives, utility providers, and other interested parties. From this database the COP will lay out a comprehensive strategy for engagement which will include a series of facilitated public meetings, focus group meetings, individual stakeholder interviews, and participation in various community events as needed. The public involvement strategy will be ongoing and continuously implemented at various stages throughout the planning process in order to keep citizens and stakeholders actively engaged. The total number of focus group interviews, public meetings, and community events will be determined by CMCOG, Fairfield County, and the consultant team during the negotiation process.

Task 2 Key Activities:

2.1. Develop Community Outreach Plan

2.2. Develop Stakeholder Database

2.3. Hold Focus Group Meetings and Individual Stakeholder Interviews

2.4. Hold Public Meetings and Participate in Community Events

2.5. Incorporate Stakeholder Input into the Planning Process

Task 3: Community Master Plan

The purpose of the community master plan is to inventory and analyze community assets and needs throughout the many local sub-areas of the county. This component will rely heavily on the COP to solicit input from key community stakeholders from both the public and private sector. This comprehensive community asset inventory and needs assessment will include but not be limited to an examination of natural resources, the transportation network, water and sewer systems, institutional and organizational capacity, education and workforce development, and other key quality of life indicators. This analysis will also include an assessment of growth and development trends, demographic and socioeconomic data, labor force characteristics, residential real estate markets, and commercial retail

leakages and opportunities throughout the county. All existing planning documents and policies (e.g., comprehensive plans, strategic economic development plans, transportation plans, and school improvement plans) will be reviewed and integrated into the planning process. The final piece of this community master plan will be to compile a list of policy and project recommendations that will help to address pressing short and long term community needs as well contribute to enhancing the overall economic development potential of the county.

Task 3 Key Activities:

3.1. Review of Existing Plans and Programs

3.2. Community Input as Defined in the COP

3.3. Community Asset Inventory and Needs Assessment

3.4. Residential and Commercial Real Estate Analysis

3.5. Growth and Development Scenario Planning

3.6 Policy and Project Recommendations

Task 4: Economic Development Plan

The purpose of the Economic Development Plan is to describe the existing economic base of the county and surrounding region and to identify and define opportunities for growth, diversification, and strategic positioning within the local, regional, and global economy. This component of the plan will include economic base projections, inventory market incentives, describe business retention and recruitment tools, establish parameters for education and workforce development, and provide a multi-sector competitiveness assessment and market positioning strategy. The plan will also review governmental policies, procedures and codes that affect economic development and growth, as well as help to identify, analyze and define opportunities for internal and external coordination and partnerships. Finally the plan will integrate key information from the community master plan component in order to help identify other opportunities and constraints for economic development such as housing, schools, availability of land, infrastructure capacity, residential and commercial real estate, as well as the condition of town centers and connectivity to larger regional markets. This component of the planning process will also produce a comprehensive list of policy, program, and project recommendations.

The majority of these tasks will be coordinated through the I-77 Alliance which is currently producing a larger economic development strategic plan for all of their member counties along the I-77 corridor. The consultant team will work closely with representatives from the I-77 Alliance to coordinate with their planning process and to integrate their analysis within the larger framework of the Fairfield County strategic plan.

Task 4 Key Activities:

4.1 *Community Input as Defined in the COP*

4.2 *Coordinate with the I-77 Alliance*

4.3 *Economic Analysis/Competitiveness Assessment*

4.4 *Market Positioning Strategy*

4.5 *Policy Review*

4.6 *Strategic Partnerships/Coordination*

4.7 *Integration with Community Master Plan*

4.8 *Policy and Project Recommendations*

Task 5: Financial Plan

The purpose of the financial plan is to provide a capital improvement program based on the strategic recommendations generated from the other two components of the planning process. The plan will provide a comprehensive prioritized project list and implementation timeline that will be analyzed in the context of existing and future revenue streams. This component of the plan will also provide guidance on investment recommendations and financial management strategies to help strengthen local institutional and organizational capacity for long term economic growth and investment.

Task 5 Key Activities:

5.1. *Community Input as Defined in the COP*

5.2. *Development of Capital Improvement Program*

5.3. *Development of Financial Management Plan*

Task 6: Final Report and Action Plan

All analyses, results and recommendations from the previous tasks will be compiled and summarized into a final report to document the overall study effort and present a finalized list of action strategies for Fairfield County and all associated stakeholders to use as the planning process moves into an implementation phase. The action plan component of the final report will include a summary matrix that combines all policy, project, and program recommendations in terms of priority and implementation responsibilities. The PAC, stakeholders, the general public, and Fairfield County will be provided with ample opportunity to provide input as outlined in the COP prior to the report being finalized and adopted by Fairfield County Council.

Task 6 Key Activities:

6.1. Prepare Draft Report and Action Strategy Matrix

6.2 Submit Draft Report for Review as Required by the COP

6.3 Incorporate Input and Prepare Final Report

6.4 Submit Final Report for Adoption

7. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

7.1. Work Schedule

The RESPONDENT must agree to begin work upon issuance of a notice to proceed and to complete this work within twelve (12) months of the date of notice to proceed. The work shall be guided by a detailed flow diagram prepared by the RESPONDENT and furnished to CMCOG within one week of receipt of notice to proceed, and approved by CMCOG. The project shall be considered complete only after action has been taken by CMCOG and Fairfield County to approve the final deliverables. Periodic payments for the work shall be made in accordance with a schedule proposed by the RESPONDENT and approved by Fairfield County.

7.2. Deliverables

The RESPONDENT shall provide copies of all draft documents, copies of an Executive Summary of the Final Report in an 11 x 17 Brochure format, PowerPoint presentations, and copies of the final report. The number of copies shall be determined between the RESPONDENT and the CMCOG AND Fairfield County project management team. These documents shall also be provided in electronic format.

7.3. Briefings

A series of formal briefings shall be held by the RESPONDENT for the CMCOG and Fairfield County project management team. These meetings shall be held at least once every month at an agreed upon location during the course of the project. The purpose of the briefings will be to apprise CMCOG and Fairfield County of the activities of the RESPONDENT, to schedule future activities and to ensure that the project is on schedule. Minutes for these meetings shall be the responsibility of the RESPONDENT.

7.4. Meetings

Public meetings shall be conducted by the RESPONDENT during the course of this project. The RESPONDENT shall be responsible for the logistics for these meetings and will implement the COP as identified in Task 2 of the scope of work. The number of meetings shall be negotiated between the RESPONDENT and CMCOG/Fairfield County.

7.5. Presentations

At least five (5) technical presentations shall be made to the CMCOG and Fairfield County as specified by the CMCOG and Fairfield County project management team following the completion of the plan. All presentations will include an electronic copy of slides in PowerPoint format to be provided to CMCOG and Fairfield County as a deliverable.

7.6. Insurance Requirements

The RESPONDENT shall effect and maintain insurance at its own cost and expense to protect itself, CMCOG and Fairfield County from claims under Workers' Compensation Acts; from claims for damages because of bodily injury including sickness, disease, or death of any of its employees or other parties; from claims for damages because of injury to or destruction of tangible property; and from claims arising out of the performance of professional services caused by errors, omissions, or negligent acts for which it is legally liable, each in the amount of \$1,000,000 or statutory amount as applicable.

7.7. Equal Opportunity/Non-Discrimination Compliance

The successful RESPONDENT will take affirmative action in complying with all federal, state and local requirements concerning fair employment and employment of the handicapped, and concerning the treatment of all employees, without regard or discrimination by reason of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin or physical handicap.

7.8. Funding

Funding for this project will be provided by Fairfield County. Costs incurred prior to notice-to-proceed will be the responsibility of the RESPONDENT and will not be reimbursed. All travel expenses prior to notice to proceed shall be at the RESPONDENTS expense.

7.9. CMCOG as Procurement Agent

CMCOG as Procurement Agent: (a) Authorized Agent. Fairfield County has authorized CMCOG to serve as a procurement agent for this solicitation. Under this authorization CMCOG will assist the Fairfield County in the development and solicitation of the Request for Proposals (RFP) and provide other procurement tasks as necessary. (b) Purchasing Liability. CMCOG as the authorized procurement agent is acting on behalf of Fairfield County to assist in the procurement process. The assistance provided by CMCOG to Fairfield County will not include the acceptance or entry into of any contract on behalf of Fairfield County. Fairfield County has and shall retain all such authority and responsibility. Any contracts awarded as a result of this procurement are between the RESPONDENT and the Fairfield County. CMCOG bears no liability or financial responsibilities arising out of or relating in any way to this procurement process or resulting contracts.