



June 29, 2020

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
(RE-ADVERTISEMENT)**

**AUDIT OF CENTRAL MIDLANDS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
GENERAL PURPOSE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

Due Date:

July 27, 2020 by 2:00 p.m. EST

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

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1. INTRODUCTION

CMCOG is requesting proposals from qualified Certified Public Accounting Firms to audit its general purpose financial statements for fiscal year ending June 30, 2020 and to audit the basic financial statements of the Central Midlands Development Corporation (CMDC) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2020 with the option to renew up to five succeeding years.

The audits are to be performed in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards as adopted by the AICPA; the standards set forth for Financial audits in the U. S. General Accounting Office's (GAO) Government Auditing Standards; the provisions of the Federal Single Audit Act of 1984; and the provisions of the U. S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-128, "Audits of State and Local Government", Circular A-133, "Audits of Institutions of Higher Education and Other Nonprofit Institutions" and 2 CFR 200.

2. RFP INSTRUCTIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

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 five (5) copies plus one (1) digital copy of its proposal to Gregory Sprouse at the address above no later than **2:00 p.m. EST on July 27, 2020**. 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	June 29, 2020
Final Date to Receive Written Questions/Clarifications	July 13, 2020 @ 5:00 p.m. EST
RFP Closing Date	July 27, 2020 @ 2:00 p.m. EST
Evaluation Committee Recommendation	July 30 , 2020
Intent to Award Released	July 31, 2020

2.3. Labeling of Proposals

All proposals must be submitted in a sealed envelope or package clearly marked “Proposal for Professional Auditing Services” 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 **July 13, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. ET**. Confirmation of receipt will be provided. It is the responsibility of the RESPONDENT to follow up with the official contact if no confirmation is received. 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 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. CMCOG may reject any or all proposals in whole or in part if it is determined to be in the best interest of CMCOG.

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 RESPONDENT in connection with a procurement transaction shall not be subject to public disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act; however, the RESPONDENT 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 RESPONDENT. 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 RESPONDENTS 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 RESPONDENT.

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 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 RESPONDENT is encouraged to use DBEs to meet the tasks and milestones of all procurement requests.

3. PROPOSAL FORMAT AND 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:

1. Name and contact information for the proposed project manager who will be the sole point of contact for CMCOG during day to day operations;
2. Background information on the Firm as it relates to the requirements of the RFP to include:
 - a. Location of the office from which the work will be done,
 - b. Number of full time employees,
 - c. Business license #,
 - d. Federal ID #,
 - e. Number of years the firm 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;
3. Background information of all sub-contractors as it relates to the requirements of the RFP;
4. Documentation that the firm is a properly licensed certified public accountant in South Carolina;
5. Evidence that the firm has previous experience in auditing governmental agencies which are recipients of federal funds;

6. Experience, if any, providing Auditing or Accounting Services to a Regional Council of Government;
7. Assurance that the firm meets the independent standards of the “ GAO Standards for Audits of Governmental Organizations, Programs, Activities and Functions”
8. Statement of the firm’s equal employment opportunity policy to include recruiting policies and hiring practices.

3.4. Key Personnel

Provide a proposed project management structure that identifies the project manager/supervisors and all personnel who will be assigned to work on the audit, including a description of their abilities, qualifications, and experience. Include resumes showing contact information, relevant experience, and continuing education for all key individuals (including sub-consultants) who will be completing a portion of the scope of work.

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, level of effort, 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. Fee Schedule/Cost Proposal

State the total cost and all inclusive fees for the audits of CMCOG for the Fiscal year ending June 30, 2020 and the audit of CMDC for the Fiscal year ending June 30, 2020. ***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.***

3.7. 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. SCOPE OF SERVICES

4.1. RECORDS TO BE AUDITED

CMCOG is a regional council of governments with an annual operating budget of \$12 million and pass through funds of over \$5 million. CMCOG uses a modified accrual basis of accounting for all funds. Accounting records are being maintained using AccuFund Accounting Software.

Central Midlands Development Corporation (CMDc) is a non-profit organization incorporated in South Carolina. This Corporation has minimal activity in Fiscal year 2020.

4.2. REPORT REQUIREMENTS

1. Reports of internal control and compliance examinations must include a statement that the examination was conducted in accordance with applicable auditing standards including, but not limited to, OMB A-133, OMB A-128, OMB 2 CFR 200 and other applicable federal and state requirements furnished by CMCOG. Such reports must state whether the examination disclosed instances of significant noncompliance with laws and regulations. Any findings of noncompliance or ineligible expenditures must be presented in sufficient detail for management to be able to clearly understand all circumstances relative to the issue.
2. The selected firm shall review the general audit plan with appropriate CMCOG staff identifying the records to be audited and the procedures to be followed.
3. The reports are to be addressed to the CMCOG's Board of Directors and should include but not be limited to, the following:
 - a. Balance Sheet;
 - b. Statements of Actual and Budgeted Revenue, Expenditures, and Changes in Fund Balances;
 - c. Summary of Revenue and Expenditures by Fund/Program;
 - d. Statement of Revenue and Expenditures by Fund/Program.

4.3. TIME CONSIDERATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

Preliminary audit work may be performed two to four weeks prior to the close of the fiscal year. Post-closing work may begin approximately thirty days following the close of the fiscal year at a time mutually agreeable between CMCOG and the selected firm. The preliminary audit report for CMCOG must be completed no later than October 31st. The final report must be submitted by November 15th.

The selected firm will prepare all financial schedules to be included in the final report. Report preparation, editing and printing shall be the responsibility of the selected firm.

4.4. REPORT REVIEW AND COPIES REQUIRED

A draft report will be prepared and discussed with the CMCOG's Executive Director. Twenty five (25) copies of the final report must be delivered to CMCOG's office by November 15th. If the selected firm provides the paper, CMCOG's copier will be made available to produce the necessary copies.

4.5. WORKING PAPERS

Working papers must be retained for a period of, at least, three years following the date of the final report. Working papers must be available for examination by authorized representatives of the cognizant federal and /or state agencies and CMCOG.

4.6. ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE

CMCOG staff is available to assist the selected firm in reproducing documents, pulling random samples and providing general explanations relative to financial records and internal controls. Appropriate work area and access to copier will be provided.

5. EVALUATION AND AWARD PROCESS

5.1. Selection Committee

CMCOG 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 and evaluate all of the responsive proposals. Each proposal will then be scored and ranked based on the established selection criteria outlined herein. A recommendation for award will be made to the highest ranked, responsive and responsible RESPONDENT whose proposal is determined to be the most advantageous to CMCOG.

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.

5.2. Notice of Award

Once the evaluation committee has made a recommendation to CMCOG, 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.

5.3. 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.

5.4. Contract Negotiations

After the close of the appeal period, if no appeals were received or successfully granted, the highest ranked, responsive and responsible RESPONDENT identified in the "Intent to Award" will be invited to enter into contract negotiations with CMCOG 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 CMCOG and the selected RESPONDENT. If an agreement cannot be reached with the selected RESPONDENT, CMCOG will select the next highest ranked, responsive, and responsible RESPONDENT 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.

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

6. EVALUATION CRITERIA

RESPONDENTS will be evaluated using only the factors stated below. Evaluation factors are stated in the relative order of importance.

6.1. Qualifications and Experience (45%)

The ability of a prospective RESPONDENT will be evaluated under the terms of the RFP relative to having demonstrated experience and capabilities needed to successfully perform all aspects of the Audit. Qualifications of professional personnel assigned to the project, as specified in the proposal including Sub-consultants, will also be measured by both education and experience, and with particular reference to experience on similar projects (e.g., performing audit or accounting services for regional councils of governments or other governmental entities that are the recipients of federal funds).

6.2. Technical Proposal (30%)

This refers to the technical soundness and suitability of the RESPONDENT'S stated approach to the project, the comprehensiveness of the proposed approach, and the techniques to be used. A determination will also be made as to 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.

6.3. Cost Proposal (25%)

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