

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS/REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

Requestor: Delaware County Economic Development Oversight Board
Under the umbrella of Delaware County Commerce Center
Laura Goodrich Cairns; Executive Director
(610) 566-2225 [LGCairns@DelCoPA.org](mailto:LG Cairns@DelCoPA.org)

Timing: Approximate six-month process from contract execution to deliverables
Proposal: Economic Development Strategic Plan for Delaware County, Pennsylvania
Where we are, where we want to be, how we get there both internally and externally.

Deadline for submission: May 10, 2021 3:00pm EST.

Pre-Bid Meeting for RFP/RFQ Review:

Pre-Bid Meeting will be held on **April 13, 2021 at 10:00am** EST virtually with members of the decision-making team. All interested bidders are required to attend by having at least one team member present. All questions and responses will be shared with all bidders and posted on the Commerce Center website. For a link to this virtual meeting please email Laura Goodrich Cairns lgcairns@delcopa.org or request by phone (610) 566-2225.

The Delaware County Commerce Center is currently seeking proposals from qualified consultant firms to develop an economic development strategic plan to be implemented within the next three to five years. The resulting plan should reflect and complement Delaware County Council's policy goals, Delaware County Planning Department's Countywide Comprehensive Plan, and Delaware County Workforce Development Board's new Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act plan. Special consideration should also be made within the work product for the enduring economic repercussions of the current pandemic recession, and its impacts to Delaware County's economy. Delaware County seeks to build a stronger economy than existed pre CV19, by creating a more diverse, sustainable, and supportive economic ecosystem.

Overall, the strategic plan should address the needs, impediments, strengths, and opportunities in our existing business climate, while defining county strengths and potential to attract and grow new economic opportunities. The Delaware County Commerce Center wants to encourage and promote desirable economic development within Delaware County consistent with planning and policies, to maintain and attract an equitable and diverse tax base.

Background –

Delaware County is strategically located between two Metropolitan Centers, with an International Airport, Private Marine Terminal, and over 550,000 residents. Road and rail access make the entire Mid-Atlantic Region accessible. It is a very socio-economically diverse County, with a wide range of communities ranging from some of the wealthiest zip codes on the east coast to an impoverished third-

class city. In addition, the county hosts a wide range of diverse populations and in one public school district there are over 82 languages and dialects spoken.

Delaware County Planning Department's Comprehensive Plan 2035 can be accessed on the Delaware County Government Website Here: <https://www.delcopa.gov/planning/delawarecounty2035.html>

SCOPE -

Interested firms should have demonstrable knowledge of the Federal and Pennsylvania Economic Development laws, policies, practical abilities, and regulatory limitations in practicing economic development within the Commonwealth.

The scope of work should include a market analysis, (defined later in this document) identify and prioritize a program of work and provide a realistic implementation and development strategy set over the course of no more than three years. The final work product will be developed in direct coordination with Delaware County Commerce Center and solicit and include stakeholder input, hosting issue specific focus groups, and other such related meetings as determined by direction of Delaware County Commerce in conjunction with the selected consultant.

The selected consultant will work with Delaware County Commerce Center to refine project objectives, clarify and coordinate deliverables, develop a detailed project schedule for deliverables resulting from the consult, community outreach, and public meetings. The selected consultant should also be prepared for some on-site meetings when more acceptable according to public health guidelines.

1. Market Analysis (Where we are) should begin to address, but is not limited to –

- National and International trends that may impact the Delaware County economy in near term and future.
- National and regional commercial and industrial space trends, and utilizations as a result of the recession.
- Identify industries and clusters by three-digit NAICS in Delaware County that are dominant, waning, emerging, and non-existent but could be good for the Delaware County economy.
- Identify current Delaware County economic development strengths and weaknesses, including an assessment of the EDOB umbrella strategy and the roles of the many authorities operating under that umbrella.
- Identify Delaware County's growing economic sectors.
- Approaches to supporting that growth, but also encouraging an economically diverse economy.
- Optimizing of all the available incentives, programs, and statutory economic development programs provided by Federal and State government.
- Identify any Federal or State allowable county-level programs that support or strengthen economic development, encourage sustainable practices, or promote diversity and inclusion.
- Identify physical and logistic infrastructure is needed to support economic development.
- Define Delaware County's economic role within the southeast, PA region.
- Identify any supports that exist or should exist to strengthen and encourage business growth (access to capital, technical assistance).

- 2. Prioritization (Where we want to be)** should address, but is not limited to -
- Delaware County's current economic development advantages, and disadvantages Include which advantages are sustainable and not easily duplicated.
 - Engagement with the Delaware County Community to identify potential obstacles that exist to creating a welcoming and supportive business environment.
 - Engage Focus Groups with specific industry segments identified to discuss advantages and disadvantages of doing business in Delaware County.
 - Evaluation of the Delaware County Commerce Center, its current capabilities, and restrictions to encouraging and sustaining a positive economic climate.
 - Key strategies that can be implemented to help sustain current businesses and assist to lift them through and out of this pandemic-related recession.
- 3. Strategy (How we get there)** should consider, but is not limited to –
- Specific actions needed to achieve sustainable economic growth.
 - Specific actions needed to encourage attraction and development for a diverse economy.
 - Specific actions Delaware County Commerce Center can take to promote a welcoming supportive economic development culture, diverse in business and ownership.
 - Entrepreneurship strategy that encourages the growth of essential assets of the Delaware County economy.
 - Industry specific focuses: Creative Class, Tech, Advanced Manufacturing, etc.
 - Evaluation of Educational, Medical and Transportation assets as economic drivers.
 - Access to Capital to support start-ups, small, and disadvantaged businesses.
 - Redevelopment and repurposing existing buildings in commercial corridors.
 - Economic development funding strategy to support achievement of action plan.

DELIVERABLES:

- 1) Written analysis of the current economic climate in Delaware County, market strengths and weaknesses, in its relation to the southeastern PA region. Considering current and future trends nationally and internationally that may disrupt or enhance the Delaware County economy, including the CV-19 pandemic recession.
- 2) Specific identification of Delaware County's and Delaware County Commerce Center's strengths and weaknesses, constraints and opportunities for economic development and economic health.
- 3) Development of a prioritized strategy based on economic data, and input from County business and community leaders to formulate specific objectives and strategies.
- 4) Specific action steps that should be taken within three years to achieve the welcoming, supportive, and diverse economy Delaware County seeks to implement.
- 5) Recurring funding streams and funding strategies to assist Delaware County in achieving those goals.
- 6) Performance measures and metrics to assess implementation of strategies and recurring action items.

EXPECTATIONS:

- Interaction and engagement with the business and cross section of the business and community sectors in Delaware County to gain a better understanding of the business climate strengths and weaknesses.
- Meetings and engagement with the various Authorities operating under the umbrella of the Economic Development Oversight Board, as well as other related Authorities.
- Meetings, both with Steering Committee and focus groups with Delaware County business owners and community leaders based on market analysis data.
- Comparative analysis and potential need to meet with other Pennsylvania Economic Development Agencies to compare/contract the Delaware County Commerce Center structure, and economic development service delivery.
- Attendance and presentation of the Economic Development Strategy to County Elected Officials, and Delaware County Economic Development Oversight Board
- Please consider this to be a six-month process at which point the final expectations may be required in person.

PROPSAL REQUIREMENTS:

To be considered, any proposal must be received no later than Monday May 10th, at 3:00pm. EST

By Mail: Laura Goodrich Cairns
Acting Commerce Director
Economic Development Study
Delaware County Commerce Center
100 W 6th Street; Suite 100
Media, PA 19063

Electronically: LGCairns@DelCoPa.org

*If file size is too large for email, please contact Laura Goodrich Cairns in advance to arrange delivery ahead of deadline through a file sharing service.

- Proposal should include firm's qualifications and identify key personnel for this engagement.
- Project Manager's name, and experience detailing similar projects and approach to services.
- Project team names, titles, and summary of experience on similar projects.
- Names of the firm's principals and level of involvement they will have with this project.
- List of current contracts/projects and projected completion dates
- Identify any subcontractors that are being considered, and for what portion of this study; provide qualifications and key personnel for all subcontractors.
- Include references with contact information that are willing to discuss your firm's capacity. References should be recent and from projects not older than 5 years.
- Detailed project budget by task.

Approach:

Proposals should provide a narrative statement demonstrating an understanding of intent of this RFP. The narrative should also provide details on the methods your firm would

engage to complete the study. We are specifically seeking how your firm would engage our business and community leaders to receive a broad spectrum of input across industry and ownership. The plan should be actionable.

Budget:

Please provide a detailed budget to include hourly rate for all-assigned personnel, number of hours assigned to personnel, breakdown of non-labor costs, allocation between consultant and any subcontractor, travel for potential meetings by 3rd Quarter of 2021, and a cost not-to-exceed price.

Additional:

Applicant shall defend, indemnify, save and hold the Delaware County Commerce Center harmless from any and all claims, suits, judgments and liability for death, personal injury, bodily injury, or property damage arising directly or indirectly from the performance by the consultant, its employees, subcontractors, or assigns, including legal fees, court costs and other legal expenses. Applicant Consultant acknowledges that it is solely responsible for complying with the terms of this RFP.

The selected consultant understands and agrees that all services and activities performed under the terms of this proposal are as an independent contractor.

Once selected, the consultant will provide and maintain comprehensive general liability and property damage insurance in the minimum amount of \$250,000.00 per person for injury and death in a single occurrence; \$1,000,000.00 per occurrence for injury or death of more than one person in a single occurrence; and \$500,000.00 for a single occurrence of property damage, and which shall be endorsed to protect the Commerce Center from claims of bodily injury and of property damage arising out of any services or activities performed by the Applicant or its employees, agents, officers, assigns, or subcontractors under its proposal.

The Commerce Center shall be listed on the above insurance policies as an additional insured. Such policies shall not include any provision limiting any potential sovereign immunity of the Commerce Center or its agents or employees. Applicant certifies, by submitting its proposal, that it will secure the requisite insurance coverage required by this section; that such coverage will be in effect for the duration of the services provided; and that the policies will not be cancelled or changed unless at least 30 days prior notice has been given to the Commerce Center.

EVALUATION CRITERIA:

From the complete proposals received before the deadline, finalists may be selected to present their respective proposals to the selection committee for review. Finalists shall be scored and ranked based on criteria that includes but is not limited to:

- Technical Approach to project
- Professional qualifications of key personnel
- Previous experience and proven performance with similar projects
- Business and Community Stakeholder participation methods
- Understanding of project purposes
- Ability to meet schedules and budgets.
- Current workload and availability of necessary personnel

- Estimated costs and flexibility to adjust the proposed work program to meet constraints.
- Quality and clarity of proposal
- Other factors deemed relevant by the Selection committee.

*Delaware County reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals, and at its discretion, may select a firm outright or select a finalist(s) for video interview.

SCHEDULE:

RFP Available:	March 1, 2021
Q & A Conference Call with interested bidders:	April 13, 2021 10:00am EST
Proposals Due:	May 10, 2021 3:00pm EST
Optional Interviews:	May 14, 2021
Consultant Selected:	May 19, 2021