



Gladwin Countywide Master Plan: 2024-2029

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

PROFESSIONAL CONSULTING SERVICES TO PREPARE A NEW MASTER PLAN
ON BEHALF OF GLADWIN COUNTY AND ITS MUNICIPAL UNITS

8/14/2023

PURPOSE:

The Gladwin County Board of Commissioners is soliciting proposals for a new master plan to be completed in 2023/2024. Respondents must offer a proposal that will meet the scope of services, requests and general description of the work activities identified in the Request for Proposals (RFP), while adding what the Respondent would have to offer to the master plan.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Gladwin County is located at the center of Michigan's Lower Peninsula. The County is comprised of 18 local units of government, including fifteen townships, two cities, and the County. Gladwin County is primarily rural with a very active agricultural community. The cities serve as commercial, industrial, and residential hubs. Gladwin is also known for being "Michigan's Backyard", with numerous lakes and rivers providing recreation and vacation property to many out-of-county residents.

Members from all jurisdictions will be involved in the Gladwin Countywide Master Plan process.

- Master Plan is required by law to be renewed every 5 years
- Major developments in the community or in nearby communities have affected the underlying principles, strategies, or land use needs in particular areas: particularly the development of renewable energy (wind and solar)
- Addressing alignment with the Redevelopment Ready Community (RRC) expectations set forth by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC)
- Development of countywide broadband access in rural areas stemming from Gladwin County's approval of ROBIN grant funding
- Collaboration efforts in the County with its delegated authority for dam restoration and management, the Four Lakes Task Force and its designated Economic Development Engine, the Middle Michigan Development Corporation

Therefore, the Board of Commissioners is seeking proposals from qualified firms (“Consultant”) to develop a new Master Plan on behalf of all Gladwin County jurisdictions. This will include providing technical and public engagement assistance for creating a new community vision and identifying long term goals and objectives. The Consultant must demonstrate a capacity to work closely with project partners, key stakeholders, various municipal staff, community boards and commissions, and the public while updating the Plan.

PROPOSAL TIMELINE:

Request for Proposals Released _____ Monday, August 14, 2023, at noon
Deadline to Submit Questions _____ Monday, September 5, 2023, at noon
Deadline to Receive Proposals _____ Monday, September 18, 2023, at noon

The Gladwin County Board of Commissioners reserves the right to modify any element of the timeline should it deem necessary.

PRE-SUBMITTAL MEETING:

No Pre-Submittal Meeting has been scheduled for this project. Please see Section “Questions and Requests for Clarifications” below regarding submitting questions.

SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS:

Consultants must submit by email a PDF copy of proposal by 2:00 pm on Monday, September 18, 2023 labeled “Gladwin Countywide Master Plan 2023 Proposal” to mjustin@gladwincounty-mi.gov

The firm’s name and address shall be clearly indicated in the email message. Proposals, and amendments to Proposals, received after the date and time specified above will not be accepted. Proposals via mail or fax will not be accepted. Sales calls or presentations will not be allowed during the RFP process.

The RFP can be downloaded from this website: www.gladwincounty-mi.gov

DISSEMINATION OF RFP INFORMATION:

The Board of Commissioners may issue responses to requests for clarifications, questions, comments, and addenda to this RFP, or other materials related to this solicitation, on their website: www.gladwincounty-mi.gov. It is the responsibility of the Consultant to check the website regularly during the solicitation period for updated information. By submitting a Proposal, Consultants are deemed to have constructive knowledge and notice of all information pertaining to this RFP.

ADDENDA TO THE RFP:

Any change(s) to the requirements of this RFP initiated by the Board of Commissioners will be made by written addenda to this RFP. Any written addenda issued pertaining to this RFP shall be incorporated into and made a part of the terms and conditions of any resulting agreement. The Board of Commissioners will not be bound to any modifications to or deviations from the requirements set forth in this RFP unless they have been documented by addenda to this RFP. Consultants will be required to document that they are aware of all addenda issued, if any, by the Board of Commissioners in their Proposal.

QUESTIONS AND REQUESTS FOR CLARIFICATIONS:

1. Contact Person for the Project: All questions or contact regarding this RFP must be directed to Mark Justin, who can be reached by email at mjustin@gladwincounty-mi.gov.
2. Clarifications of the RFP: Consultants are encouraged to promptly notify Mr. Justin of any apparent errors or inconsistencies in the RFP. Should a Consultant require clarifications to this RFP, the Consultant shall notify the Board of Commissioners via email in accordance with Subsection 1 above. Should it be found that the point in question is not clearly and fully set forth in the RFP, a written addendum clarifying the matter will be issued and posted on the website.
3. 3. Deadline for Submitting Questions:
 - a. All questions must be submitted to the Board of Commissioners by noon on Monday, September 5, 2023
 - b. The Board of Commissioners is not responsible for failure to respond to a request or question that has not been labeled correctly. Questions can be submitted via email to mjustin@gladwincounty-mi.gov as long as they are received no later than the date and time specified above
4. Board of Commissioners Responses: The Board of Commissioners, in its sole discretion, will respond to requests for clarifications, questions, and comments. Responses will be posted to the website on or before 2:00 pm on Friday, September 9, 2023

COST OF PROPOSAL PREPARATION:

Any party responding to this RFP shall do so at their own risk and cost. The Board of Commissioners shall not, under any circumstances, be liable for any pre-Contractual expenses incurred by any Consultant who elects to submit a Proposal in response to this RFP or by any Consultant that is selected. Pre-contractual expenses are defined as expenses incurred by consultants and the selected Consultant, if any, in:

1. Preparing a proposal and related information in response to this RFP;
2. Submitting a Proposal to the Board of Commissioners;
3. Negotiations with the Board of Commissioners on any matter related to this RFP;
4. Costs associated with interviews, meetings, travel, or presentations; or
5. Any and all other expenses incurred by a consultant prior to the date of award, if any, of an agreement, and formal notice to proceed

The Board of Commissioners will provide only the staff assistance and documentation specifically referred to herein and will not be responsible for any other cost or obligation of any kind, which may be incurred by the Consultant.

GENERAL SCOPE OF WORK:

Included in the scope of services will be the following tasks:

Development of Countywide Master Plan

1. Conduct public engagement sessions to gather input from residents, businesses, property owners, administrative staff, and the Boards and Committees of the jurisdictions within Gladwin County
2. Review and audit the current Master Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and any other relevant documents, and note any relevant inconsistencies between the documents
3. Conduct a community-wide survey to obtain input regarding trends, outlooks, and preferences
4. Identify strategies for priority redevelopment areas that will define a clear direction of how and where development/re-development should occur
5. Determine a specific implementation plan, with associated timelines and responsible parties, for each immediate, short, and long-term goal
6. Develop a framework that will facilitate annual evaluation of the Master Plan's implementation in each community
7. Follow the Michigan Planning Enabling Act requirements (Act 33 of 2008; MPEA)
8. Be able to complete project in no more than twelve (12) months of contract execution date

Economic Development Strategy

Gladwin County and its jurisdictions do not currently have an economic development strategy. One needs to be developed that identifies the community's economic development goals, actions, timelines, and responsible parties that meet objectives. For an economic development strategy to follow best practices, the individual objectives must tie back to one or more of the goals identified in the regional context. The Consultant shall tie the Board of Commissioner's strategy to both the EMCOG Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, and the emerging strategies developed by the MMDC. The process will include conducting visioning sessions to identify and understand the community's resources, and to develop those resources to accommodate business growth with particular focus along any areas identified during the Master Plan initiative.

Individual Jurisdiction Components

In past iterations of the Countywide Master Plan, each jurisdiction had the option of contracting with the Consultant to provide more in-depth discussion for their area, which is included in the Countywide Master Plan as an addendum. The Board of Commissioners expects each entity to engage in this process, as well as some Townships or Villages. This would include identifying priority redevelopment sites, updating or developing a Capital Improvements Plan, and updating or developing a Downtown Plan. Please include the costs that would be associated with these components as separate from the cost of the Countywide Master Plan and Economic Development Strategy in the Proposal; costs can be included as an hourly rate (with anticipated hours spent on each component) or as completed project. Individual jurisdictions will then decide if they will opt to pay for this additional work.

DELIVERABLES:

1. One un-bound copy of the new Master Plan
2. A digital copy of the new Master Plan in .pdf format
3. A digital copy of the Master Plan in .docx format
4. All tables associated with the new Master Plan in .xlsx format
5. Any additional raw data
6. All pictures, graphics, renderings, and charts associated with the new Master Plan in .jpg format
7. GIS data will be provided in a format that can be used to display layers on the Gladwin County GIS Authority's existing GIS site

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS:

The successful proposal shall:

1. Each response to the RFP should be accompanied by a letter of interest not exceeding one (1) page that summarizes key points of the proposal and which is signed by an officer of the firm authorized to commit the Respondent to the obligations contained in the proposal. The letter should also include a phone number and email address for the Respondent's contact person
2. Provide information on the respondent's background and experience in the following:
 - a. Preparing municipal master plans and updates
 - b. Creating economic development strategies
 - c. Engaging the public for planning purposes, including methods utilized for public engagement
 - d. Following RRC Best Practices in previous master plans
3. Highlight any characteristics or capabilities that make the respondent uniquely qualified to perform the services requested
4. Include a proposed timeline of the process indicating the Consultant can complete the services within twelve (12) months
5. Provide a separate proposed fee range for completing each part of the Scope of Work. The final scope and fee will be negotiated with the successful respondent but is expected to be consistent with the fee range submitted with this proposal
6. Include Consultant's recommended terms of payment (such as percent of contract due at what time)
7. Disclose any actual or potential conflicts of interest with any jurisdictions of Gladwin County, including its officers, elected officials, agents, and employees
8. Describe any partnerships with any organizations/subcontractors/suppliers that will play a role in this project

9. Identify at least three (3) references including the organization/business, address, contact person, phone number, date of services, and scope of services
10. Provide examples of at least two (2) similar projects completed in the last five (5) years. Examples may be provided in electronic formation or by providing an internet link
11. Provide a copy of your certificate of insurance verifying professional, commercial general, automobile liability, and workers' compensation insurance coverage with minimum policy limits as detailed in this RFP. The coverage must be maintained and carried in force for the duration of the contract.

Any additional information believed necessary to assist the Board of Commissioners in evaluating your proposal may also be submitted.

PROPOSAL CONDITIONS:

1. By submission of a proposal, the respondent certifies that they have not paid or agreed to pay any fee or commission, or any other thing of value, contingent on the award of this contract to any employee, official, or current contracting consultant of the Board of Commissioners. The respondent certifies that the financial information in this statement has been arrived at independently and without consultation, communication, or agreement, for the purpose of restricting competition as to any matter relating to such costs with any other proposal or Bidder
2. The contents of the proposals shall be considered public records of the Board of Commissioners and its member jurisdictions. Any respondent submitting a proposal hereunder further acknowledges and agrees that the Board of Commissioners is a public entity which is required to abide by laws governing public records and shall not be liable for disclosures required by law. All materials submitted in response to this RFP shall become the property of the Board of Commissioners and its member jurisdictions upon delivery to the address set forth above
3. The Board of Commissioners or its representatives shall not be held responsible for expenses incurred in the preparation or subsequent presentation of the RFP response
4. This RFP is not an offer to enter into a contract, but rather a solicitation for Proposals
5. The Board of Commissioners reserves the right to reject all Proposals in its sole discretion. The Board of commissioners reserves the right to reject any and all Proposals in whole, or in part, and accept any Proposal or portion of the Proposal that, in their opinion, best serves the interest of the Board of Commissioners and its member jurisdictions
6. The selected consultant and their subcontractors are required not to discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment to be employed in the performance of the Proposal with respect to hire, tenure, terms, conditions or privileges of employment, because of race, color, religion, national origin, or ancestry or also because of age or sex, except based on a legitimate occupational qualification. Violation of this requirement may be regarded as a material breach of the Michigan Fair Employment Practices Act and may be subject to prosecution
7. The awarded contract will be governed by the laws of the State of Michigan. Venue for any claims or litigation regarding this contract may only be brought in the 80th District Court, 55th Circuit

Court or the Federal District Court, Eastern District of Michigan. The selected vendor/contractor shall not assign the contract or sublet it or portions thereof without the written consent of the authorized Board of Commissioners representative. The Board of Commissioners insurance and indemnification requirements as well as standard contract provisions will be a requirement of the awarded contract

EVALUATION CRITERIA:

The selection process will be based on responses to this RFP, verification of references, and any interviews to verify the ability of proposer to provide services in response to this document. The Board of Commissioners will evaluate each proposal based on the following criteria:

1. Demonstrating clearly and completely, your firm's understanding of the RFP scope of work (20 pts.);
2. Qualification, skill, and experience level of staff and creativity conducting a public engagement strategy (20 pts.);
3. Reasonableness of project cost (10 pts.);
4. Reasonableness of project timeline (10 pts.);
5. Demonstrated experience on projects of similar scope and favorable reference checks (20 pts.);
6. Previous experience preparing a master plan and economic development strategy that comports with the MEDC RRC program is preferred (20 pts.)

The Board of Commissioners will evaluate proposals using the above scoring criteria. Scores are private and tabulated for aggregate only. The Board of Commissioners reserves the right to select any proposal that, in the sole judgment of the Board of Commissioners, is in the best interests of the Board of Commissioners, Gladwin County and its municipal units even if the selected proposal does not achieve the highest score.