



SIERRA VISTA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

401 Giulio Cesare Ave, Sierra Vista, Az 85635-2411

SVMPO ON-CALL SOLICITATION – RANKING CRITERIA

To make the final selection list two thresholds needed to be met per agreement of the Ranking Committee:

1. A combined average ranking score of 75 or higher; and,
2. Selected by at least two committee members as top ranked in selected category

Those that were under 74 in total ranking scores and those that were selected by either one or no committee members in a category were not selected. Those that had failed to submit all required forms and documentation were not ranked.

The Ranking Committee notes that this was a difficult task to review and cut out any of the submittals as we had the good fortune of having 25 strong applications submitted. There were five specific evaluation criteria that were ranked (as per page 28 of the RFP). Observations about these categories follow:

A. 10% Understanding of the purpose and scope of services of this RFP.

The purpose of this Scope of Services was clear: to provide planning services for approved Work program activities for regional agencies: specifically, the Sierra Vista MPO, it's three member jurisdictions (City of Sierra Vista, Cochise County, Town of Huachuca City) and, under a reciprocal agreement, to all other Metropolitan Planning Organizations and Council of Governments in the State.

Those Proposals that noted all of those items: planning, regional, Work Programs, SVMPO, three member jurisdictions, other MPO/COG's scored the highest. The more of those items left out, or a belief that this was only for the City of Sierra Vista or just for the SVMPO, scored lower in this category.

Average ranked scores ranged from a high of 9.88 to a low of 6.13

B. 30% Expertise of firm's personnel, in particular, identified project managers for each work category, including subcontractors, when applicable.

As noted earlier, all submitting firms were strong in their presentation of expertise of personnel. Overall, the ranking committee was impressed with the caliber of the submitting firms and their lead/key staff. The addition of strong sub-consultants identified to fill gaps made this criteria tightly clustered in terms of ranking scores and was not a deciding factor in final selection.

Average ranged scores ranged from a high of 27.88 to a low of 21.1



A. 30% Previous experience in the selected work categories as demonstrated by project examples documenting successful accomplishment of the project scope.

The work categories were clearly identified as being regional work activities within approved Work Programs of MPO's or COG's. Those that provided examples that were regional in scope were ranked higher than those that focused entirely on State or local projects. Although that work experience is transferrable, and was not discounted, a firm that did not use any regional work examples were not ranked as highly as those that showed more experience in the unique aspects of regional planning work. However, again, all firms showed strong levels of experience and this criteria, although having a larger range of scores, was not a deciding factor in final selection.

Average ranked scores ranged from a high of 28.38 to a low of 19.50.

B. 20% Ability and commitment to deliver required products and services, meet deadlines for submitting work products, and provide a high level quality control as evidenced by past performance.

This evaluation category likely was the strongest factor in selection. Firms were requested to provide specific data for past projects: original schedules, actual completed schedules with explanation of the differences, project budgets. Those that included that data ranked highest. Those that were dropping a template in place and did not notice or ignored this requested data not typically requested for such proposals ranked lower.

It is fully expected and typical of regional planning work that estimated scheduled and completed schedules are not the same and the ability to track that information and succinctly summarize why difference occur is critical to managing regional planning projects in the State. Also, budget information was notably missing from some of the proposals. Quality control protocols or policies were also given just a very quick brush over or skipped by some firms. The ranking committee was less concerned about what those schedules or budgets were as they were that they were provided as requested. The highest ranked firm in this category provided this data in a highlighted box within their Proposal – it was entirely possible to respond to this section clearly and succinctly.

Average ranking scores ranged from a high of 18.63 to a low of 10.00. 54% of firms ranked less than 15 points on this evaluation category; firms not selected had average rankings around 10 points in this category.

C. 5% Compatibility of firm's management approach with the SVMPO.

Top ranked firms showed some knowledge of the unique challenges and opportunities in southwestern Cochise County. Lower ranked forms clearly used a template or dropped a standard chart or graphic of how that firm approached public outreach with no attempt to be specific to this specific region. Lower ranked firms also failed to clearly describe how they planned to communicate to staff or used a generic statement about communication without making an attempt to describe



what the firm felt was the SVMPO's management approach was (which it might be pointed out shows up as the footer in the front page of RFP). Those that acknowledged unique challenges in these times of limited or standard outreach techniques received more points. Anyone that mentioned anything out of the SVMPO Public Participation Plan or the very detailed SVMPO Title VI Plan would have been very highly ranked: but not one single firm did. It was also surprising that limited references were made to website outreach and improvements needed there given the focus of that in the SVMPO Work program as a need. However, higher ranked firms did make specific statements that were consistent with existing SVMPO plans and highlighted a willingness to provide a significant level of communication to both staff and the public as part of their strategies.

Average ranked scores ranged from a high of 5.00 to 3.13

D. 5% Reasonability of proposed staff labor rates within the market area.

It was the intent that costs would be a major selection factor in task orders but even as low of an evaluation percentage as this evaluation criteria was it turned out to be a deciding factor for some firms.

Average ranking scores ranged from a high of 4.63 to a low of 2.63.

Proposed staff fully loaded burden rates ranged from a high of \$298 to a low of \$35.00 (removing the one proposed \$20 dollar intern). The average rate for firms ranged from high of \$149 to low of \$50.00, with the average rate for a transportation planner (or staff filling that role) of \$137.00. Firms that averaged higher than that were ranked lower, firms with lower rates were ranked higher in terms of their reasonability of rates within this market area.

It is acknowledged that it is difficult to set a Not-to-Exceed rate for a lengthy On-Call timeframe. It is also acknowledged that within the categories difficult skill sets have different rates that could be considered reasonable to charge. That said the overhead rates that the State allows is often unreasonable or prices out a firm from regional or local project work. The observation was made that a higher priced firm may have a difficult time successfully competing for smaller funded regional projects unless they adjusted their expectations for their hourly rates in the more rural MPO/COG regions.

Overall Ranking of Firms

The second aspect of selection of the combination of which firms the ranking committee selected as their overall top three by category. Given the caliber of the Proposals received this proved to be a difficult selection for all of the ranking committee members but as the federal regulations require a minimum of at least three bids be requested for any given project (with this specific On-Call allowed only a very limited sole source threshold) it was important that a selection of top firms be identified.



Given the potential state-wide reach of this On-Call for planning services, the threshold was made that at least two of the ten ranking committee members would have to have selected that firm in a category to make the cut. In some categories the selection was very sharp and clear – virtually every committee member selected the same firms. In other categories, the selection was less clear and in the last category, the technical services category, there were firms that targeted only one specific, but critical regional, technical services needed.

Total average ranking scores ranged from a high of 93 to a low of 67. The top ranked firm had the top scores in all five evaluation category and was top selected of all the ranking committee members for some categories and most of them for other categories. The firms not selected had one or no ranking in any category – this factor took out 29.16% of the proposals. Lower scores under 75 took out 20% of the proposals.