



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
WAYNE COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR AGRICULTURE

Issued December 6, 2017

Question and Answer Period Ends December 22, 2017
Proposals are due by January 12, 2018

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REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

WAYNE COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR AGRICULTURE

INTRODUCTION

Wayne Economic Development Corporation (WEDCO), a 501(c)6 Not for Profit Corporation, is seeking a qualified consultant (“Consultant”) to develop an Economic Development Plan for Agriculture (“Agriculture Plan”) for Wayne County, Pennsylvania. The project is funded in part through a federal grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) with the local match being provided by the County of Wayne. The Agriculture Plan is an outgrowth of the *Wayne Tomorrow!* strategic planning initiative.

The Wayne County Commissioners are committed to building industry, entrepreneurship, and family-sustaining jobs that complement the County’s excellent quality of life through a broad initiative called *Wayne Tomorrow!* Created to make the County’s Comprehensive Plan a vibrant and living document and to engage a wide variety of community partners, *Wayne Tomorrow!* has successfully transformed the way disparate organizations operate within the County by removing silos and creating an integrated, collaborative approach to development. An Action Committee comprised of over 36 individuals and organizations meets monthly. Additionally, many more individuals participate through workgroups that focus on specific areas: Agriculture, Business & Economic Development, Education & Workforce Development, Quality of Life, and Sustainability. Each workgroup has conducted a SWOT analysis, identified goals and strategies, and prioritized short- and long-term projects. These were integrated into a single development plan to create a supportive, adaptable environment for community and business growth.

One of the key strategies identified by the Agriculture Workgroup is drafting the Agriculture Plan. Agriculture is the ultimate local industry and influences all aspects of an economic ecosystem, including economic development, job growth, infrastructure improvements, technology innovation, energy security, healthcare, labor force, and quality of life. The proposed plan would be the instrument to build the agricultural industry sector based on accurate and real-time data, local advantages, workforce integration, and collaboration. The Consultant would analyze the impact existing agriculture has on Wayne County and create the framework for advancing sustainable agriculture that:

- supports existing producers and agri-businesses;
- expands Wayne County’s agriculture sector and farming capacity by increasing agricultural productivity;
- attracts new agri-businesses to locate in Wayne County;
- builds career awareness, enhances agriculture career pathways, increases employer engagement with educational and training facilities, attracts young farmers and support them to be successful.

Specific attention is given to agricultural workforce development planning, which will dovetail with the broader economic study. A tandem approach is needed to address labor capacity for sector maintenance and growth. Simultaneously determining occupational need and preparedness must be inclusive in the planning efforts. The integration of workforce elements in an economic development planning effort is indicative of *Wayne Tomorrow’s* collaborative development model—this integration is infused in all County initiatives.

The Agriculture Workgroup, which is comprised of individuals representing agri-businesses, economic and workforce development, education and so forth, will take the lead on implementing the Agriculture Plan.

BACKGROUND

Wayne County is located in the northeast corner of Pennsylvania within the northern Pocono Mountains. Approximately 90 miles from New York City, Wayne County is home to 51,500 residents. The County is a mix of small downtown centers, agricultural lands, and open space, outdoor recreational areas. The County shares its borders with New York State to the north and east, and the Pennsylvania counties of Pike, Monroe, Lackawanna and Susquehanna to the south and west.

Wayne County is not part of a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA); our nearest urban centers are Scranton, Binghamton and the New York City/northern New Jersey metro area. There are approximately 1,450 business establishments in Wayne, and the top employment industries are Healthcare, Retail Trade, and Accommodation and Food Services. Wayne County's general economy is struggling and has the lowest personal per capita income in the 7-county northeast PA region. Our Per Capita Personal Income of \$37,447 is 75% of the State's average of \$49,745. We have the least diversified industry profile in the region—our top three employment sectors are typically low-wage earning industries and comprise nearly half of our total employment. We are addressing our unsustainable economic trends through *Wayne Tomorrow!*

The last substantial study of agricultural land use in Wayne County took place in 2002 by the Wayne County Department of Planning. The Planning Department studied changes over a 43-year period from 1959 to 2002 (Wayne County Agricultural Land Use/Land Cover Study, 2002). The study revealed that agricultural land use was on a decline and the County was experiencing a loss of cropland primarily due to reforestation. The following are some of the major findings of the report:

- In 1959 cropland covered 18.4% of Wayne County, in 2002 it covered 12.9%.
- In 1959 pasture/brush covered 20.4% of Wayne County, in 2002 it covered 11.2%.
- In 1959 forest covered 55.6% of Wayne County, in 2002 it covered 65.2%.
- 61.2% of the 1959 cropland was still used as cropland; in 2002, 18% was pasture/brush, 10.9% was forested and 7.2% was residential.

The authors of the report concluded: *"The greatest contributors to forestland were pasture/brush and cropland. Wayne County's farming industry and its farmland appear to be more influenced by the farmer's ability to survive in the world's economy than by competing with growth pressures from residential or commercial developments."*

More recently, the *Wayne Tomorrow!* Agriculture Workgroup completed a SWOT analysis of the industry. Their analysis suggests that the agriculture industry within Wayne County is trending to smaller farm operations, which need more support. For example, the marketing mechanism is not there for the smaller farms. Data from the 2012 Census of Agriculture has the number of farms in Wayne County as 711 and Land in Farms at 112,998 acres (as compared to 117,929 acres of cropland, pasture/brush and farmstead found in 2002). To help strengthen the overall industry sector, the workgroup's number one goal is to develop the Agriculture Plan.

Aside from the pursuit of grant funds for the Agriculture Plan, County partners have promoted other related activities. Wayne Highlands School District has a new four-year agriculture curriculum; Lackawanna College Lake Region Center (Hawley) has a new Sustainable Agriculture Program – the only two-year degree program of its kind in the Commonwealth; the Wayne Pike Workforce Alliance is working with the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture on building industry talent; and a local business is working with community partners to develop a critically-needed slaughterhouse facility.

PROPOSAL GENERAL INFORMATION

This Request for Proposal (RFP) seeks qualifications, planning and implementation documents, and pricing from consulting organizations who are experienced in strategic planning within the agriculture industry sector, inclusive of economic and workforce development elements. WEDCO is interested in receiving proposals from any prospective organization meeting the qualifications outlined in this document. The proposals should be prepared simply and economically, providing straightforward and concise descriptions of the consulting organization's capabilities and sufficient information to satisfy the requirements of this RFP. False or inaccurate information will result in the rejection of the consulting organization's response.

RESPONSE TITLE

The RFP title for this project is "Wayne County Economic Development Plan for Agriculture."

COST & TIMING

The project is funded through a federal grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission with the local match being provided by the County of Wayne. WEDCO intends to comply with open and competitive bidding procedures for engagement of services for a professional consultant. Funds will be used to pay the Consultant for costs associated with development of the Agriculture Plan and to compensate them for generating the required number of (paper and digital format) copies of the plan (and related materials) when it is published. The Consultant will be required to submit monthly progress reports to the Agriculture Workgroup so that the planning progress can be tracked and the Consultant properly compensated.

The contract awarded for this project will be a FIRM FIXED-PRICE contract. Periodic payments for the Consultant's efforts will be contingent upon receipt of deliverables deemed satisfactory. The contract terms shall remain firm during the project and shall include all charges that may be incurred in fulfilling the terms of the contract. An invoice schedule will be negotiated as part of the Consultant's contract.

WEDCO anticipates awarding the contract the week of January 15 - 19, 2018. The final, approved draft of the Agriculture Plan is required by June 27, 2018, which coincides with the federal grant period. Any extension requests must be in writing, have good cause, and be submitted to WEDCO no later than April 15, 2018, and be approved by both WEDCO and the Appalachian Regional Commission.

PRIMARY CONSULTANT RESPONSIBILITIES

The selected Consultant will be required to assume responsibility for all services offered in the proposal and requested herein whether or not the Consultant produces them. Furthermore, WEDCO will consider the selected Consultant as the sole point of contact with regard to contractual matters.

CONTENT OF PROPOSALS

- A. **Scope of Work** – A draft Scope of Work has been prepared by the Agriculture Workgroup (**Attachment A**). All proposals must include an explanation of how the Consultant expects to carry out the scope of work. The Agriculture Workgroup understands that various approaches can be taken to the strategic planning process and is receptive to suggested changes to the work program, particularly with regards to cost-savings, innovative ideas, or customized processes. The proposal narrative should also address the timetable for completing tasks.
- B. **Qualifications** – The proposal must describe the qualifications and experience of the organization and the personnel to be assigned to the project. Information provided should

include direct experience with the specific subject-matter area and must provide examples (via web links or printed materials) of the three most similar plans undertaken by the Consultant's organization and the extent to which performance goals were stated and achieved. Provide associated organizations' names and addresses, names of contact persons, and telephone numbers for reference.

- C. **Cost and Price Analysis** – The Consultant and any Subcontractor must provide a cost estimate of sufficient level of detail to document expenses by task. The following will be reviewed to support the reasonableness of the quotation.
1. Direct Labor Costs – Itemize so as to show the following for each category of personnel with a different rate of pay per hour:
 - Category (Planner, Project Manager, Research Associate)
 - Estimated Hours
 - Rate per Hour
 - Total cost for each category and for all direct labor costs.
 2. Labor Overhead – Specify what is included and the rate used.
 3. Travel – Itemize proposed mileage and cost/mile.
 4. Subcontract Costs – Itemize
 5. Cost of Supplies and Materials – Itemize
 6. Other Direct Costs – Itemize
 7. General Overhead Costs – Specify what is included and the rate used.
 8. Total Cost

A cost summary form, attached hereto as **Attachment B** and made part of this RFP, shall be completed and submitted. Please include the amount of time the proposal will remain valid. Ninety days (90 days) from submission date is preferred and if the timeframe is shorter than 90 days, please note that information clearly in the proposal. **This portion of the proposal must be bound and sealed separately from the remaining proposal.**

- D. **Nondiscrimination** – The items below pertain to the nondiscrimination, sexual harassment and drug free workplace policies that must be observed by WEDCO and its contractors and consultants. Respondents are required to include a company non-discrimination policy statement with their response to this RFP.
1. Contractors or subcontractors, in all solicitations or advertisements, will not discriminate against any employee, candidate for employment, or applicant for employment because of race, color, creed, gender, age or national origin.
 2. Contractors or subcontractors shall maintain written sexual harassment and drug-free workplace policies and shall inform their employees of the policies.
 3. Contractors or subcontractors shall abide by all applicable federal or state statutes, ordinances, laws and regulations, including, but not limited to the Americans with Disabilities Act.
 4. In the event a contractor or subcontractor is in non-compliance with the nondiscrimination clause, the contract may be cancelled, terminated or suspended in whole or in part.

EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

All proposals will be evaluated based upon completeness, quality, and level of detail of the following criteria:

- A. Understanding of the needs and requirements of this RFP, and the approaches necessary for meeting them.
- B. Prior experience in agriculture plan preparation and reference checks of current and past clients.
- C. Program of work for preparation of the plan.
- D. Overall qualifications, skills, and relevant prior experience of the key personnel assigned to the project, and the capability to carry out and support the project in a timely manner.
- E. Creativity and innovation.
- F. Cost of services.
- G. Utilization of and coordination with the *Wayne Tomorrow!* Agriculture Workgroup and County agencies regarding the use of existing surveys, data, maps, inventories, and studies.

The Consultant's proposed cost, while an important consideration, will be measured in addition to the above factors in determining the most advantageous proposal.

Evaluations will be structured, ranked on a point system, and fair. Selection of, and contract negotiations with the Consultant, including scope of work, deliverables, schedules, and fees will be conducted pursuant to WEDCO's procurement practices, grant requirements, and any code or legal requirements of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

PRESENTATIONS

Any or all responding consulting organizations may be invited to make a presentation. If so, WEDCO will coordinate with the respondents to set a date and time during the week of January 15 – 19, 2018 for their presentation. All costs incurred by the consulting organizations regarding the presentations will be the responsibility of the consultants.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR COSTS

The responding consultant organizations shall be fully responsible for all costs incurred in the development and submission of the proposal or any other costs incurred by the consultant prior to issuance of an agreement or contract. WEDCO shall not assume any contractual obligation as result of the issuance of this proposal request, the preparation or submission of a proposal by a consulting organization, the evaluations of the proposals, or final selection.

DISQUALIFICATIONS

Factors such as, but not limited to, any of the following may be considered just cause to disqualify a proposal without further consideration:

- A. Evidence of the consulting organization's inability to successfully complete the responsibilities and obligations of the proposal.
- B. Evidence of incorrect information submitted as part of the proposal.

- C. Any attempt to improperly influence any member of the evaluation team.
- D. Existence of any lawsuit, unresolved contractual claim, or dispute between the consulting organization and WEDCO.
- E. A consulting organization's default under any previous agreement with WEDCO, which resulted in termination of the Agreement.

GRATUITIES

No person shall offer, give or agree to give any *Wayne Tomorrow!* Agriculture Workgroup, WEDCO Director, or County employee any gratuity, discount, or offer of employment in connection with the award of contract by WEDCO. No WEDCO employee, Director, or County employee shall solicit, demand, accept or agree to accept from any other person a gratuity, discount, or an offer of employment in connection with a WEDCO contract.

RFP MODIFICATION

WEDCO reserves the right to modify or change any information presented in this RFP. Any RFP modification will be provided to all consulting organizations on the initial distribution list or who have indicated interest by a written request via regular mail at 32 Commercial Street, Suite 1, Honesdale, PA, 18431, or by email to mbw@wedcorp.org.

RFP INQUIRES

RFP addenda, and question and answer responses will be sent to all consulting organizations on the initial distribution list or others that request in writing that they be added to the distribution list via regular mail at the WEDCO address or by email to mbw@wedcorp.org. Questions regarding the RFP should be sent in writing via email to mbw@wedcorp.org by no later than December 19, 2017. Questions and/or requests for clarifications received after this deadline will not be answered. WEDCO will address each question within a week of receipt and no later than December 22, 2017, and all questions and their responses will be sent electronically to all consulting organizations. All requests must go through WEDCO.

RETURN PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS

The RFP Response should include one (1) printed copy and one (1) electronic copy on USB Storage Device or other storage mechanism of your proposal in Adobe PDF format. The person authorized to obligate the Consultant must sign the original proposal. The response should be delivered to the following address in a sealed envelope labeled "*Wayne County Economic Development Plan for Agriculture*" clearly marked on the outside of the envelope. Email responses are permitted to mbw@wedcorp.org as long as an original signed copy is sent to WEDCO postmarked on or before the due date of January 12, 2018. The proposal shall be delivered to:

Wayne Economic Development Corporation
Attn: *Wayne County Economic Development Plan for Agriculture*
32 Commercial Street, Suite 1
Honesdale, PA 18431

The deadline for accepting RFP responses is 4:30 P.M. on Friday, January 12, 2018 at the above address or by email with an original signed copy mailed and postmarked by the due date. Responses received after that time will be returned unopened to the consulting organization. WEDCO is not responsible for any delivery errors caused by delivery carriers or email servers.

RFP ACCEPTANCE AND REJECTION

WEDCO reserves the right to accept any RFP response, to reject any or all RFP responses, to waive irregularities or informalities in any RFP response, and to make the award in any manner deemed in the best interest of Wayne County.

CONTRACT CANCELLATION

If the Consultant's proposal progresses to a contract for services, WEDCO reserves the right to terminate all or any part of the contract at any time upon prior written notice to selected Consultant. Thereafter, WEDCO will pay Consultant costs properly allocated to work performed prior to termination.

ADDITIONAL PROPOSAL MATTERS

Respondents to this RFP should note the following disclaimer:

The intent of this RFP is to provide a general framework to assist consulting organizations in preparing proposals. This RFP does not provide a complete understanding of the project, nor does it contain all matters upon which an agreement must be reached. WEDCO reserves the right to include additional or modified performance specifications. The issuance of this RFP and the receipt of proposals do not bind or otherwise impose legal obligation upon WEDCO, the Appalachian Regional Commission, or Wayne County.

This RFP does not commit WEDCO, the Appalachian Regional Commission, Wayne County, or any of its affiliates or subsidiaries, to pay for any costs incurred in the review of this RFP, the preparation and submission of a proposal, or any other costs incurred by a respondent prior to execution of a binding and definitive agreement between a Consultant and WEDCO. Further, WEDCO has no obligation to accept a proposal or to proceed with any possible activities described herein. No representations or warranties whatsoever are being made as to the accuracy or completeness of the information contained in this RFP.

WEDCO reserves the right to amend this RFP through written or electronic notification.

SCOPE OF WORK

The Consultant will engage with Wayne County agencies, *Wayne Tomorrow!* Agriculture Workgroup stakeholders, agri-businesses, educational institutions and others; conduct research, surveys, public outreach and so forth to gain an understanding of past and current agricultural activities, initiatives and programs in the County; review current, innovative and forward-thinking agriculture initiatives and trends in the U.S. and determine what would be appropriate for Wayne County; and draft an Agriculture Plan that contains, at a minimum, the elements found in the bulleted list below. Existing agricultural studies and data will be made available to the Consultant, including (but not limited to):

- A. Agriculture Land Use Study, Wayne County Planning Department, plus GIS data already available;
- B. *Wayne Tomorrow!* SWOT analysis, completed in 2012 with input from different agriculture sectors (Dairy, Livestock, Equine, Vegetable and others);
- C. Farms Inventory (partially complete - will be completed through local sources);
- D. Inventory of processing facilities, resources and other agricultural infrastructure.

- **Brief History – Wayne County Agriculture**

- **Land Use Analysis and Plan**

- **Existing Land Use and Potential Economic Opportunity**

- Map and analyze existing agricultural land, estimate its current economic impact, and identify new market and production opportunities based on available land, soil and climate characteristics, proximity to suppliers and consumers, infrastructure, consumer demand and so forth.
 - Cross reference occupational need and projections aligned with new market and production opportunities. Address NAICS, CIP, and SOC (Industry, Education and Occupational codes) to formulate targeted areas for workforce development analysis. Development and dissemination of sector-related career awareness information.

- **Resource Inventory**

- Identify and compile existing agriculture resources, e.g., financing programs, production facilities, technology and training programs, and farm protection programs, that will ultimately be the foundation for a Resource Guide.
 - Identify gaps in existing training programs and develop or enhance career pathways with secondary and post-secondary institutions, inclusive of short-term credential bearing activity. Outreach and convene secondary schools and post-secondary providers to address capacity in skill-development infrastructure.

- **Refresh SWOT Analysis**

- Refresh SWOT analysis; in addition, outline barriers /challenges to increasing Wayne County's agricultural economic activity, including (but not limited to) the County's soil qualities, geography, demographics, financial barriers to entry for young farmers, etc.

- **Agriculture Innovation – National/Regional Analysis and Plan**

- **Identification of current, innovative and forward-thinking national and regional initiatives**

- Identify and summarize contemporary and innovative ideas, initiatives, and/or trends in agriculture that are happening on the national or regional levels that could be applicable to Wayne County. Examples would be new crops and methods of crop production, new

markets, inclusion of technology, experiential learning and workforce development, funding programs, etc.

- **Sustainable Economy Strategies**

- **Development of strategies for increasing local sustainable economic activities and supply of local farm products**

- Strategies at a minimum should address or include the following:
 - A. Aspects related to improving our soils, using baseline soil analysis and limitations in Wayne County from existing data from Penn State, the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USDA), PA Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), and Wayne Conservation District.
 - B. Increase local food access and local consumption/demand.
 - C. Identify underserved markets and business opportunities in Wayne and beyond.
 - D. Identify specific new production facilities or infrastructure needed.
 - E. Identify innovations, applicable to these opportunities or to current products.
 - F. Attract and support younger producers and new agricultural businesses to be successful long-term.

- **Interrelationship Among Plan Components**

- The plan shall contain a statement of interrelationships of plan components. This analysis should be performed to assure that all plan components are consistent and in balance. Examples are:
 - A. The interrelationship between new market activity and workforce availability;
 - B. The interrelationship between land use, facilities and infrastructure;
 - C. The interrelationship between existing resources and potential economic opportunity.

- **Implementation Strategy**

- Based on analysis and development of the Agriculture Plan components, the Consultant will develop a comprehensive action plan that identifies and addresses the most vital issues.
 - Each recommendation should:
 - A. Evaluate the potential impacts over 5 and 10 years;
 - B. Identify near-term (1-2 year) and long-term (3+ year) action items;
 - C. Identify specific funding sources to help execute these action items.

The Agriculture Plan components should be written for a non-technical audience with appropriately designed graphics and narrative discussion of the findings. In addition, a final, concise executive summary should integrate and interpret the key findings and strategic recommendations. Detailed statistical data, all references and sources, and methodological issues should be organized in appendices. An inventory of resources available for entrepreneurs and communities should also be included in an appendix.

The Consultant must submit ten (10) printed copies of the Agriculture Plan and two electronic versions: an editable Microsoft Word file and an Adobe PDF file. The Consultant must also submit an editable Microsoft Excel Workbook or an editable Microsoft Access database containing all relevant data compiled during the planning process. The Consultant will provide all metadata (field name description, definition source, sourced date and so forth) for all raw and computed data fields. If geographical

information system maps are developed for the project, the Consultant must also provide electronic and editable versions of all map databases, map images, and map documents.

Consideration should be given as to how tabular and graphic information will be integrated in the plan narrative. All maps should be accompanied by well-documented supporting databases.

The Consultant is required to provide at least two weeks for the Agriculture Workgroup to review and comment on the draft plan (preferably as different sections are completed), and then to incorporate that feedback into their final recommended plan. A successful outcome is a plan that the stakeholders, *Wayne Tomorrow!* Agriculture Workgroup and Action Committee, and the County Commissioners will publicly support and act upon, with resulting benefits to Wayne County's local food system, rural lifestyle, sustainability, and economic resilience.

COST SUMMARY FORM

Task

Brief History – Wayne County Agriculture \$ _____

Land Use Analysis and Plan _____

Resource Inventory _____

Refreshed SWOT Analysis _____

Agriculture Innovation – National/Regional Analysis and Plan _____

Sustainable Economy Strategies _____

Interrelationship Among Plan Components _____

Implementation Plan _____

Miscellaneous _____

Direct Costs – Mileage, Meetings, Reproductions, etc. _____

Others (please specify below): _____

Total Costs: \$ _____