



REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CONSULTING SERVICES FOR THE CITY OF DOUGLAS

The City of Douglas (City) is seeking submissions of qualifications from interested multi-disciplined and qualified firms, which may include individuals, groups, or organizations for the purpose of consulting on future economic development needs, seeking investors and investing in the community.

INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

The City of Douglas is a charming and historic border community in Cochise County, Arizona, with a population of 16,534. Uniquely situated at the southeast corner of Cochise County Arizona, Douglas is located on the U.S./Mexico border making trade with Mexico a huge part of its economic exchange. A study conducted by the General Services Administration in 2019 showed the existing port is inadequate to process commercial and regular vehicular traffic. The bipartisan infrastructure package signed into law on November 15, 2022, included \$400 million to fund the Douglas Two-Port Solution. The Two-Port Solution includes the construction of a new commercial port of entry 4.5 miles west of Douglas and the expansion of the existing Raul H. Castro POE that will be dedicated to regular vehicle and pedestrian traffic. This funding represents the largest investment by the federal government in Douglas and Cochise County in over a decade. The City and County are working together with stakeholders to ensure that the infrastructure necessary to support this investment is brought to bear in a timely fashion to support the ports of entry and the anticipated investment in commercial, industrial, and related developments. The City is expecting economic and population growth because of this new port of entry that will make the region an attractive location for manufacturing and logistics companies enabling more efficient trade with Mexico.

The City is actively seeking new growth and development opportunities for its residents and businesses, and it recognizes that effective economic development efforts require collaboration and partnership between the public and private sectors.

Through this RFQ, the City is seeking qualified economic development firms to provide expertise in the following areas:

- Building and strengthening partnerships in Mexico.
- Attracting and recruiting manufacturing enterprises to the region.
- Identifying and fostering business venture investments.
- Developing and marketing signature sporting, cultural, concert, or special events that elevate the City's profile.
- Expanding access to affordable housing through targeted investments.

- Facilitating effective intergovernmental relations with the U.S. and Mexican stakeholders to improve ports of entry, enhance trade corridors, and advance strategic lobbying efforts at state and federal levels.
- Supporting additional economic development activities aligned with the City's goals for growth, innovation, and community prosperity.

The City of Douglas is committed to leveraging its strategic location and unique assets to create opportunities for its residents and businesses. Qualified firms are encouraged to submit proposals that demonstrate their expertise, vision, and commitment to achieving transformative outcomes.

GENERAL SCOPE OF SERVICES

The selected firm(s) will work in collaboration with the City on the items shown below. The list is not all-inclusive, and not all items are required, and only shown as possible collaborative efforts:

1. Mexico Partnerships:
 - a. Establish and strengthen relationships with Mexican businesses, government entities, and other key stakeholders.
 - b. Facilitate cross-border economic initiatives, promoting mutual economic growth and collaboration.
 - c. Develop strategies to capitalize on the City's strategic position on the U.S. – Mexico border.
2. Manufacturing Recruitment:
 - a. Identify and attract manufacturing businesses to locate operations in Douglas, supporting job creation and economic diversification.
 - b. Provide guidance on competitive incentives, site selection, and infrastructure needs to ensure successful business integration.
3. Business Venture Investments:
 - a. Develop strategies to encourage investments in local businesses, startups, and entrepreneurs.
 - b. Identify and secure funding sources, including public-private partnerships, venture capital, and grant opportunities.
 - c. Provide ongoing advisory support to facilitate business growth and sustain long-term economic impact.
4. Marketing for Signature Events and Tourism Growth
 - a. Create marketing campaigns to position the City of Douglas as a premier destination for tourism, events, and cultural experiences.
 - b. Promote signature sporting events, concerts, and cultural activities that enhance community engagement and drive economic activity.
 - c. Develop branding initiatives to highlight the city's unique identity and regional strengths.
5. Additional Economic Activities:
 - a. Provide general economic development consulting to support city objectives as needed.
 - b. Assist in implementing strategies to strengthen the local economy, attract investment, and enhance community infrastructure.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The submission package should include:

- a. Cover Letter introducing the firm and its interests in the venture, signed by the authorized representative.
- b. Identification of the firm including the name, address, phone number, website, and the name, title, and contact information of the designated point of contact.
- c. A detailed description of the firm's qualifications including experience and expertise in economic development, with an emphasis on relevant service areas outlined in the Scope of Services.
- d. Describe the firm's history including the names and bio or resume of each team member who will execute the proposed services.
- f. A detailed explanation of the firm's approach to addressing the City of Douglas' economic development objectives. An outline of how the firm will tailor its approach to the City's needs and identify the specific service areas the proposal addresses.
- g. Provide contact information for at least three references from past projects similar in scope and complexity. Please include project descriptions, services provided, and measurable outcomes achieved for each reference.

TIME OF PERFORMANCE

The consultant is expected to give this project a high priority to complete the scope of services in a complete, accurate, professional, and timely fashion.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Upon receipt of proposals, a selection committee will review and evaluate the firm's proposal. Following this initial review, selected firms may be asked to submit additional information or be invited for an interview.

A qualifications-based selection process will be used to select the consultant for this project. The evaluation rating criteria will vary depending on the scope of services being assessed. The following general criteria, with the corresponding weight (indicated in parentheses), will be used to evaluate and rank responses:

- Relevant experience and qualifications of the firm and team members (25 Points)
- Understanding of the project scope and proposed methodology and based on the ongoing need of the City of Douglas as described in the General Scope of Services section. (25 Points)
- References and past performance (25 Points)
- Consultant's Management of the Scope of Services and Schedule (25 Points)

Note: Specific deliverables and timelines will be negotiated with the selected firm(s) based on the defined project needs and priorities.

AWARD OF PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

- a. Contracts will be made or entered into with the most qualified and responsive firm except as otherwise required or authorized by law.
- b. The Contract will be executed in two (2) duplicate originals. The decision to award the contract will be made and all Consultants notified of the results within thirty (30) days of the submittal deadline.
- c. The City of Douglas reserves the following rights:
 1. To waive informalities in any proposal or in the proposal procedure.
 2. To negotiate with any, all, or none of the firm(s) that submit proposals.
 3. To reject the proposal of any persons or corporations who have previously defaulted on any contract with the City of Douglas.
 4. To reject any and all proposals.
 5. To re-advertise for proposals.
 6. To award the Contract on the basis of the most responsive proposal, as evaluated by the selection criteria.
 7. To increase or decrease the scope of work herein specified as funds may permit.
 8. To accept any item or combination of items in any one proposal.
 9. To conduct interviews with any or all Proposers if deemed necessary.
- d. Each firm, by submission of his/her proposal, proclaims and agrees and does waive any and all claims for damages against the officers or employees of the City of Douglas when any of the rights reserved by the City of Douglas in the Request for Qualifications notice herein may be exercised.

UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORK

Consultants should take the necessary steps as may be reasonably necessary to ascertain the nature and location of the scope of services and the general and local conditions which can affect the

work. Failure to do so will not relieve the consultants from the responsibility for accurately proposing and successfully performing the work required for this project. Submission of a proposal shall be construed as evidence that the Consultant is familiar with the scope of work, site, and conditions involved. The City of Douglas will not assume responsibility for any understanding or representations concerning conditions made by any of its officers or agents prior to the execution of the Contract, unless included in the invitation for Request for Qualifications.

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

All proposals must be submitted electronically no later than 4:00 PM (MST) on February 7, 2025, to:

Rene Rios, Procurement Specialist
City of Douglas
425 10th Street
Douglas, AZ 85607
Office: (520) 417-7317
Email: rene.rios@douglasaz.gov

Multiple RFQ's may be considered based on expertise on the various types of submissions and needs of the City.

This RFQ will remain open until the City determines its closing date. The first review date will be February 7, 2025, for possible consideration. Future review dates for additional consideration will take place on the 7th day of each month following the first review date.

Along with each submittal, please also include a City of Douglas Professional Services Agreement provided here along with a certificate of insurance for your business. Do not include anything under Section 2 Compensation section as that will be negotiated with the awarded firm.

The City of Douglas reserves the right to reject any or all responses to this RFQ and to waive any technicalities or irregularities. The City may also negotiate with any, all or none of the firms that submit proposals. The City also reserves the right to request additional information or clarification from firms who submit responses to this RFQ. No firm has any obligation to respond to this RFQ or to enter into any agreement or contract with the City.