

SCOPE OF SERVICES

RFP15-DOC-064

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

A. Purpose

This Request for Proposals (RFP) solicits proposals for the development of the 2015-2020 Comprehensive Development Strategy (CEDS) for the U. S. Commonwealth islands of the Northern Marianas to include the island of Saipan, Rota, Tinian and Aguigan, and the most northern islands in the Marianas. This request also seeks to update the previous CNMICEDS developed.

B. Who May Submit Proposals

A consultant, economic development agency, or any organization with appropriate expertise. Proposals that include partnership between multiple organizations with applicable areas of expertise are preferred. Parties submitting proposals in response to this RFP are referred to herein individually as “Proposer” or collectively as “Proposers”.

C. Scope of Work

1. This procurement will be made pursuant to Section 70-30.3-310 of the CNMI Procurement Regulations. The Scope of Work outlines the services required of the firm (hereafter Consultant) selected to prepare the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the CNMI.
2. Services will be procured through an independent contract.

D. Proposal Information

1. ***Closing Submission Date***
Proposals must be submitted no later than **10:00 a.m., local time, May 11, 2015.**
2. ***Submission Instruction***
Proposals and supporting documents must be:
 - a. Submitted in an original and four (4) copies to the Office of the P&S Director, Lower Base Drive or
 - b. Submitted electronically to email: procurement@pticom.com

If proposals are received after the deadline, time and date Saipan time, such proposal will not be considered/accepted.

3. ***Conditions of Proposal***

Any cost incurred shall be borne by Proposer, and under no circumstances can be reimbursed.

4. ***Right to Reject***

The CEDS commission reserves the right to reject any and all proposals received.

5. ***Notification of Award***

A notification to the successful Proposer will be made within fourteen (14) days of the closing date. All unsuccessful Proposers will be notified in writing, of the name of the successful Proposer.

E. Proposal Requirements

1. ***Cover Page***

Proposals must be signed and include the individual/firm name, address, telephone numbers, email address, and name of an authorized person submitting the proposal, along with the person's title. If the individual/firm operates from more than one location, please specify the office to which this project will be assigned.

2. ***Qualifications of Individual/Firm***

Each proposal must describe the qualifications possessed by individuals who will be performing the services under this request. Include information about pertinent prior experience, specialized expertise, and resources that the individual/firm can bring to this engagement.

- a. Proposers must have extensive recent experience in economic development planning;
- b. Proposers must demonstrate ability to do analysis of an economic region; and
- c. Proposers must prove excellent performance history.

Preference will be given for experience in economic development planning in distressed areas, particularly in the Pacific Region.

3. ***Proposed Fees***

Provide a proposed detailed fee and compensation schedule.

4. ***References***

Provide names, addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses of at least three references, including previous clients and business associates.

5. ***Conflict of Interest***

Describe any existing or potential conflicts of interest that may arise from this engagement.

6. ***Presentation***

Proposers may be asked to present their proposal in person at a meeting of the CEDS Commission.

F. Scope of Work

1. Major Project Components

- a) Review data and analysis of CNMI's economy from studies and reports from Census Bureau, CNMI government and financial institution economists;
- b) Conduct community-based meetings and/or workshops to determine needs and priorities;
- c) Put together industry cluster surveys and follow up on the surveys with a workshop attended by industry stakeholders;
- d) Review current industry clusters' growth, barriers to growth, and vulnerability to economic threats. And identify new clusters, if appropriate;
- e) Review critical infrastructure needs and gaps;
- f) Develop prioritized recommendations for infrastructure projects for gaps through community focus groups and discussions with emerging industry groups;
- g) Identify performance measures;
- h) Submit the draft CEDS Update to the Strategy Committee for approval, then to EDA for acceptance. The strategy will address all of the elements outlined in EDA's CEDS requirements; and
- i) Must comply with CEDS content guideline. (URL Reference: <http://www.eda.gov/ceds/files/CEDS-Content-Guidelines-full.pdf>)

2. Process of Analysis

- a) The Proposer must be able to provide a robust discussion on the economic conditions of the CNMI, ensuring that the narrative distinguishes the economic realities between the CNMI's island jurisdictions. The proposer shall not simply add to previously published works, however, is expected to include findings and assessments from relevant published documents following the release of the 2009-2014 CEDS that supports the discussion. To the greatest extent possible, quantifiable data from credible sources should be used in the discussion;
- b) The Consultant must include the following elements to this component of the CEDS project:
 - i. External trends and forces which have a significant impact on the CNMI's economic conditions;

ii. Internal trends and forces which have a significant impact on the CNMI's economic conditions;
iii. The impact of major shifts in the CNMI's economic environment since the release of the 2009-2014 CEDS. This element should include a discussion of forces that have specifically impacted the completion of projects listed within the 2009-2014 CEDS:

- 1) Discussion of external forces
- 2) Discussion of internal forces

c) Policies and programs which have been implemented or are currently available for implementation which have an impact on the CNMI's economic condition.

d. Apply the 2013 CNMI Econometric Model into the 2015-2020 CEDS update. (Readily available upon request)

In conducting the analysis and preparing the CEDS document, the Proposer will work alongside the established 2015-2020 CEDS Commission to develop the Assessment and Discussion of the CNMI's Economic Condition.

6. The CEDS Document

1. *Background*

The CEDS must contain a background of the economic development situation of the CNMI that accurately describes the current condition of the CNMI. This background must include a discussion of the economy, population, geography, workforce development and use, transportation access, resources, environment, and other pertinent information.

2. *Assess Previous CEDS*

Review and update 2009-2014 CEDS project listing to provide project completion discussions. For projects which have made no progress, the Consultant must be able to discuss the relevance of the project to current economic conditions. For projects which have not realized progress, but remain relevant, the Consultant shall be able to identify potential funding sources for completion outside of the government revenues. For projects that remain relevant, but incomplete, the Consultant shall integrate the project listing into a new identified project utilizing an objective ranking approach which re-evaluates the project according to the new ranking criterion.

3. *Analysis of Economic Development Problems and Opportunities*

The document must include an in-depth analysis of the economic development problems and opportunities that identifies strengths and weaknesses in the CNMI's human and economic assets, and problems and opportunities posed by external and internal forces affecting the CNMI economy. This analysis must:

- Incorporate relevant material from other government-sponsored or supported plans and demonstrate consistency with existing CNMI public and private investment strategies.
- Identify past, present, and projected future economic development investments in the region.
- Identify and analyze economic clusters within the region.

4. *Development of 2015-2020 CEDS Systemic Approach*

The Consultant must develop systemic ranking approach to objectively prioritize CEDS identified projects and priorities based on Commission feedback and public input. The Consultant must ensure that the approach utilizes quantifiable measures as a means of ranking. This will ensure that identification of projects will maximize the return of investment. While it is essential that the ranking approach utilizes quantifiable measures, the Consultant must be able to integrate social cost, which generally utilizes qualitative measures, as an element within the ranking system. Within the social cost element, the Consultant will be required to consider the three (3) primary social functions of public health, public safety and public education.

5. *CEDS Goals and Objectives – Defining Expectations*

The CEDS must contain a section setting forth goals and objectives necessary to solve the economic problems, or capitalize on the resources, of the CNMI. Any strategic project, program, or activity identified in the CEDS should work to fulfill these goals and objectives.

- Goals are broad, primary expectations for the future of the CNMI.
- Objectives are more specific than goals, clearly measurable, and stated in realistic terms considering what can be accomplished over the five (5) year time frame of the CEDS.

6. *Community, Private Sector and Public Sector Participation*

The CEDS must include a section discussing the relationship between the community in general, the private sector, and both CNMI and Federal Government agencies in the development and implementation of the CEDS. Public and private sector partnerships are critical to the implementation of the CEDS. The consultant must host two (2) public hearings for the CEDS prior to project completion on each island of Saipan, Tinian and Rota, as well as communicate the hearings relevant to the Northern Islands with the Mayor of the Northern Islands.

The first public hearing will be to advise the public of the CEDS identified project listing and solicit feedback as to additional projects which are of importance to the general public and were not identified by the CEDS committee. The public hearings must present the CEDS project listings throughout the CNMI and pay special attention to those projects that are to occur on the island of which the presentation is being held. The public hearing must also inform the public of the approved systemic ranking approach and discuss each element of the ranking system. The second public hearing will be to advise the general public of the final ranking approach and discuss each element of the ranking system.

7. *Strategic Projects, Programs and Activities*

The CEDS must contain a section which identifies projects, programs and activities designed to implement the Goals and Objectives of the CEDS. This section should identify and describe:

- Suggested Projects-
 - All suggested projects, programs and activities and the projected number of jobs to be created as a result.
 - Lead organizations responsibilities for execution of the projects.
- Vital Projects- A prioritization of vital projects, programs, and activities that address the CNMI's greatest needs or that will best enhance the CNMI's competitiveness, including sources of funding for past and potential future investments. These can be overarching "themes" for regional economic development success and is expected to include components. Funding sources should not be limited to EDA programs.

H. Plan of Action

The plan of action, as described in the CEDS, implements the goals and objectives of the CEDS in a manner that:

- Promotes economic development and opportunity;
- Enhances and protects the environment;
- Ensure that adequate infrastructure is in place or in planning to support development;
- Maximizes effective development and use of the workforce consistent with other CNMI workforce investment strategies;
- Promotes the use of technology in economic development, including access to high-speed telecommunications;
- Balances resources through sound management of physical development; and
- Obtains and utilizes adequate funds and other resources.

I. Performance Measures

The CEDS must contain a section that lists the performance measures used to evaluate the Planning Organization's successful development and implementation of the CEDS, including but not limited to the:

- Number of jobs created after implementation of the CEDS;
- Number and types of investments undertaken in the region;
- Number of jobs retained in the region;
- Amount of private sector investment in the region after implementation of the CEDS; and
- Changes in the economic environment of the region.