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I. General Guidelines

Introduction

COVID-19 has greatly impacted the region's economy and workforce. The pandemic has given rise to a hybrid workplace model in which employees work both remotely and in-office, which has greatly impacted the national and regional workforce. Not only has the pandemic caused job losses but it has also revealed the importance of having a resilient regional economy that is able to withstand economic disruptions such as pandemics, natural disasters, and other external shocks. In order to promote the long-term prosperity and durability of the regional economy, the region must foster a diversity of thriving industries that are able to withstand economic downturns.

This Request for Proposals (RFP) seeks proposals to assist in the development of an economic recovery and resilience plan for the Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission (SAP&DC), a non-profit regional economic and community development organization serving Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Fulton, Huntingdon, and Somerset Counties. The plan will complement SAP&DC’s recently completed 2020-2024 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The planning effort will address the regional economic impacts of COVID-19, examine the region's current economic condition, and describe existing economic and social assets that can be used in developing a resiliency framework. The plan will use these findings to explore what future opportunities exist for the region and will aid SAP&DC’s efforts in attracting new remote workers to the region, reaping the benefits of a hybrid workforce, and positioning itself to be a resilient regional economy in the coming decades.

To respond to the pressing issues created by the coronavirus pandemic, regional cooperation and coordination will be crucial in achieving a resilient, sustainable regional economy. As part of this effort, the plan will describe the stakeholders, organizations, and programs that will assist with implementation activities. The plan will specify potential stakeholders in the region's business community, local government, school districts, and post-secondary education institutions that can help SAP&DC’s disaster recovery efforts. The planning effort will enable SAP&DC to identify the current and future programs and activities that can mitigate the effects of the pandemic and ensure the recovery of the regional economy. The selected consultant will also help provide a priority list of funding opportunities that will enable SAP&DC to accomplish its resiliency efforts. When complete, this project will allow SAP&DC to update and improve its framework regarding recovery and resiliency goals in its short-term and long-term economic development efforts.
Who May Respond

Any consultant or other organization with appropriate expertise may respond. Ideally, the consultant will have expertise in disaster recovery and resiliency efforts, economic development, and related fields. Parties submitting proposals in response to this RFP are referred to herein individually as “Applicant” or collectively as “Applicants”.

Summary of Work

As previously mentioned, the recovery and resilience plan will examine several important topics including:

Research the impact of COVID-19 on the region

- Examine COVID-19’s effect on necessities such as food, clothing, and shelter and its long-term impact on economic resilience.
- Utilize mapping and data analysis to discover economic and demographic trends.
- Form innovative solutions for how the region can respond to the challenges presented by COVID-19.
- Utilize systems thinking to develop a holistic plan for the region rather than studying each industry in isolation.
- Develop strategies for responding to future economic disruptions and disaster recovery efforts.
- Ensure that all six counties SAP&DC serves benefit from the recovery and resilience plan.

Investigate the impact of COVID-19 and disaster recovery efforts on social capital.

- Discover how to increase social and community capital alongside efforts to increase job creation.
- Consider how to achieve economic growth without significantly disrupting social and community well-being.
- Examine which industries are most tied to promoting social and community capital.
- Determine the impact on “third spaces” outside of work and home that are vital to social capital.

Examine the challenges and opportunities that exist in housing and infrastructure.

- Research the availability and demand for affordable housing.
- Investigate how zoning restrictions (whether residential or commercial) affect how people access necessary resources.
- Determine the need for and potential benefits of multi-modal transportation (driving, biking, and walking).
- Examine the current state of vital infrastructure (sewers, pipes, drains, etc.) throughout the region.
- Evaluate the role historic towns and neighborhoods (older than 75 years) can play in revitalizing downtown areas and improving the region’s quality of life.

**Implement findings of Hybrid Workforce Study into Recovery and Resilience plan**

- Investigate how remote work has affected self-employment in the region.
- Explain the role of rural broadband in a remote workforce.
- Evaluate how the region can attract remote workers through its natural amenities.
- Investigate how to attract relocating workers from major metropolitan centers along the East Coast, such as Washington D.C., Fairfax (VA), and Allegheny (PA).
- Research the impact of a remote labor force on certain industries and economic sectors.
- Consider how business recruitment and retention efforts can take advantage of the increasing share of remote workers and growing population among several counties in the region.

**Identify local stakeholders that can help develop and implement SAP&DC resiliency and recovery objectives**

- Ensure public participation of local governments, businesses, educational institutions, and non-profits in recovery and resiliency efforts.
- Utilize existing local assets in recovery activities.
- Collaborate with local organizations to identify areas of greatest need (such as low-income areas or minority communities).
- Research the effectiveness of similar local efforts to build a resilient regional economy.
- Examine whether business “ecosystems” or “incubators” present opportunities for local markets.
- Identify anchor institutions that can aid in local recovery and resilience efforts.

**Investigate programs and funding opportunities to accomplish resiliency goals**

- Identify partners and other resources to address the needs of region
- Create a priority list of funding opportunities that will assist in implementation efforts

**Supplemental Materials**

The following sections contain important materials that will enhance the applicant’s understanding of SAP&DC’s previous work. It includes brief summaries of previous research efforts, such as the CEDS and Hybrid Workforce Study. It is strongly encouraged that the applicant read these materials in their entirety to have a more complete understanding of SAP&DC’s previous efforts as well as the recovery and resilience plan.
Goals and Objectives

As previously mentioned, the recovery and resilience plan will complement the 2020-2024 CEDS, which describes SAP&DC’s economic development strategy. The CEDS created a formal list of goals and objectives for SAP&DC to achieve. Below is an outline of the goals and objectives mentioned in the CEDS (see 2020-2024 CEDS Report for full list).

GOAL 1: SEEK EXPANSION OF THE REGIONAL ECONOMY THROUGH DIVERSIFIED JOB GROWTH
- OBJECTIVE A: Continue the gradual movement of the Region to a more technology-related, diversified economy.
- OBJECTIVE B: Create an entrepreneurial environment to support start-up enterprises and strengthen existing businesses.
- OBJECTIVE C: Support workforce development initiatives that build the talent pipeline and enhance the skills of the incumbent workforce to ensure the Region’s employers remain competitive.
- OBJECTIVE D: Expand the tourism visitation potential for the Region.
- OBJECTIVE E: Provide services and amenities intended to attract the retired (or near retired) households.
- OBJECTIVE F: Support the growth of local agriculture-related businesses.

GOAL 2: MAINTAIN AND MODERNIZE INFRASTRUCTURE TO MAKE THE REGION MORE COMPETITIVE FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- OBJECTIVE A: Improve the transportation network to tie the Region together and make the Region more accessible to other markets.
- OBJECTIVE B: Upgrade water/sewer infrastructure to accommodate new and modern growth.

GOAL 3: ADAPT COMMUNITIES TO BE MORE ATTRACTIVE AS PLACES TO LIVE AND WORK.
- OBJECTIVE A: Market the Region as an exciting, outdoor playground.
- OBJECTIVE B: Support innovative entrepreneurial initiatives that are designed to attract businesses, industries, and professionals to downtown areas.
- OBJECTIVE C: Retain and recruit younger people to stay in and/or migrate to the Region.
- OBJECTIVE D: Invest in communities and work to promote and enhance their assets.
- OBJECTIVE E: Build local leadership capacity.

GOAL 4: UPGRADE AND EXPAND TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICE IN THE REGION.
- OBJECTIVE A: Complete an infrastructure assessment in the Region to determine the best strategies to increase access and availability of broadband and cellular services to residents and businesses.
- OBJECTIVE B: Promote the deployment of high-speed broadband and cellular services throughout the Region.
• OBJECTIVE C: Develop and maintain a cutting-edge telecommunications infrastructure by supporting pilot initiatives to bring coverage to the unserved and underserved areas of the Region

GOAL 5: INVEST IN AREAS THAT INFLUENCE HEALTH AND WELL BEING WHILE RAISING AWARENESS OF HEALTH OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL RESIDENTS.
• OBJECTIVE A: Expand rural health services throughout the Region.
• OBJECTIVE B: Collaborate with employers to address employee health needs.
• OBJECTIVE C: Develop Community Plans to address substance abuse issues.

Industry Trends and Building a Resilient Economy

The 2020-2024 CEDS noted several important employment and industry trends that have occurred throughout the Southern Alleghenies Region for the last several years. Currently, the average regional wage is $688, compared to $924 for Pennsylvania. Employment in the region is primarily concentrated in five sectors: Education Services, Health Services, and Social Services (24.5%); Manufacturing (13.7%); Retail (12%); Arts, Entertainment, Recreation and Accommodation and Food Services (8.1%) and Construction (8%). Together, these five sectors comprise 66% of the regional workforce, compared to 58% at the state level. In the past seven years, the Retail, Manufacturing, and Construction industries have experienced a net loss of workers. The largest decline was in Manufacturing, which has lost roughly 3,300 jobs since 2010. Meanwhile, the Education Services, Health Services, and Social Services industry was the fastest growing, with a 2% increase in net employment. In the Recovery and Resilience Plan, the aim is to have a holistic understanding of how the performance of these industries interact with one another. Though there is a good understanding of industry employment statistics, SAP&DC wants to better understand how such industries relate to social and community capital. Discovering the potential benefits certain industries have on social capital will improve the overall resiliency of the region.

Two important strengths of the region are its location and transportation infrastructure. The region is located near several important major highways, including US 219, US 22, the PA Turnpike, and I-99. Naturally, these advantages have aided the growth of the transportation and warehousing sector. The presence of transportation infrastructure has also enabled Retail Trade, Health Care, and other local markets to thrive as they have greater access to larger markets. In addition to roads, the plan will seek how multimodal transportation can be expanded in the region. The plan will also examine the state of other vital infrastructure such as sewers, pipe, and drainage systems.

Education is becoming increasingly valuable in the modern, technology-driven economy. As previously mentioned, the Education sector is an important employer in the Southern Alleghenies Region. The region is well-positioned to take advantage of the growing need for education as several local colleges are located near it including: University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown, Penn State University – Altoona, Juniata College, St. Francis University, and Mount Aloysius.
A crucial weakness of the region’s economy is its lack of diversity among its industries. For example, the Government, Health Care, and Retail Trade sectors are more concentrated in the region than in the state or nation. Such a heavy concentration of jobs in just these industries makes the region less resilient to economic downturns. In addition, sectors with high wage white-collar jobs are underrepresented in the region. These jobs in professional services, finance, insurance, and information often attract young workers, which is a vital need for the region. Increasing education and broadband expansion efforts can play a vital role in supporting a diverse and young workforce. By diversifying the workforce and attracting young professionals (particularly in high wage, white-collar sectors), the region can achieve a more robust and resilient economy.

**Hybrid Workforce Overview**

SAP&DC recently completed a Hybrid Workforce study to examine how the rise in remote work has affected the region and what potential future opportunities exist in a growing hybrid workforce. Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, the popularity of the hybrid workplace model, which utilizes a combination of remote and in-person work, has grown considerably. A 2020 Pew Research poll found that 3% of workers said they plan to move temporarily or permanently due to COVID-19's effect on their employment. An important part of worker migration in response to COVID-19 is the rise in urban-to-rural migration. A Harris poll from 2020 found that 38% of applicants indicated that they were likely to "move out of densely populated areas and toward rural areas." The shift toward remote work has particularly impacted industries such as technology, finance, healthcare, and education. The growing popularity of hybrid work has prompted many workers to migrate from urban areas to rural areas, allowing them to enjoy the benefits of natural amenities and a small-town lifestyle. Thus, the recovery and resilience plan should explain how rural areas can attract young workers seeking the features of rural life such as outdoor activities, historic neighborhoods, and small-town charm.

The Hybrid Workforce Study described several important regional workforce trends that have occurred over the last several years. Overall, most workers leaving large cities have moved to nearby suburban counties within metro areas rather than moving to distant remote rural regions, which somewhat limits the number of workers the region can attract. Nevertheless, the rise in urban-to-rural migration has led to employment opportunities for regional hybrid workers. The number of remote workers in the Southern Alleghenies Region has risen to 12,300 workers, a 5.4% increase from 2018. The counties of Centre, Cambria, and Blair have a moderately high concentration of workers employed in industries that have opted for remote work, such as professional, technical, financial, and informational services.

With the shift towards a hybrid work environment, the region can harness its existing assets to attract more workers employed in professional services. By attracting these white-collar workers, these counties would also be able to increase the number of young professionals in their workforce, which has been an important need due to the aging population of the region. The rise of remote work has also pushed the need for increasing broadband availability to underserved areas to the forefront of economic development efforts. The increase in both rural and remote
workers also present opportunities for the self-employment sector. The need for every individual to have access to high-speed internet is crucial for a modern workforce and has only become more necessary since the outbreak of COVID-19 and its impact on the workplace.

The Hybrid Workforce model has also impacted migration between the region and nearby parts of the country. The largest in-migration of workers to the region has come from Northeast large metropolitan cities such as Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington D.C, where the cost of living is high. Workers coming from these areas have largely moved to Centre, Cambria, and Blair Counties. There has been little in-migration from nearby Pittsburgh, however, since the city has a comparatively low cost of living it has experienced a rising population due to its affordability. With a low cost of living and plentiful natural amenities, the region has been an attractive destination for urban white-collar workers in large metropolitan areas along the East Coast. Strategies for how to further attract hybrid/remote workers should be a focus for the recovery and resiliency plan.

**Alleghenies Ahead Summary**

Alleghenies Ahead was a collaborative plan put together by Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission (SAP&DC) in coordination with the six rural counties it serves to implement strategies that will boost the region’s economy, attract new residents, and guide the growth of strong communities throughout the region. It is guided by the principle of “plan regionally and implement locally,” and gives sustained attention to issues such as housing, recreation, and technology to improve the region. The plan also offered policy recommendations for each individual county on how to attract businesses and families. In addition to data analysis, the plan also included information gathered from sit-down conversations with 400 residents and over 1,100 completed online surveys.

Alleghenies Ahead identified several unique assets and advantages that could be utilized to draw migrants to the region. These assets should be considered when engaging in community and economic development efforts. These advantages were:

- Natural Amenities
- Quality public schools
- Rich agriculture
- Historic cities and boroughs
- Located close to major cities of Pittsburgh, Baltimore, Washington,

Alleghenies Ahead dedicated considerable time to describing two important trends that emerged regarding current issues for the region. First, the region faces a demographic disadvantage in which a rapidly aging population and lack of in-migration of younger workers to the Southern Alleghenies Region has impacted its’ labor market and housing market. This harmful trend is reflected in the shrinking cohort of young people throughout all six counties since the 1970s. In addition, the region experienced a net out-migration of over 10,000 residents between 2010 and 2016. The second trend impacting the region is the varying implementation capacity of local
jurisdictions in that, although there are many local jurisdictions, they have little capacity to attract households and businesses to their area. To address this, the plan identified five market types to describe the status of each county, so they can effectively pinpoint their needs and invest in themselves.

The plan found there were several negative trends related to the region’s workforce. Since the post-war period, there has been a severe lack of high-wage jobs attainable for those without a college degree. There has also been a growing shortage of workers given the aging population of the region and the large number of residents out-migrating. The plan found that the share of the labor force over the age of 55 is now at a record high of 30% while it was only 10% in 2000. As a result, employers have struggled finding workers to fill jobs opening.

Alleghenies Ahead classified eight crucial issues that have greatly impacted the ability for communities to attract younger people and businesses:

1) Broadband and cellular service,
2) Collaboration and coordination,
3) Business and workforce development,
4) Housing and blight,
5) Recreational amenities and natural assets,
6) Agriculture,
7) Public health and safety,
8) Transportation.

With these eight difficulties listed, Alleghenies Ahead distinguishes which of these issues are most pressing for each individual county and which are problems faced by the entire region.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regional Priorities</th>
<th>Bedford County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Broadband and cellular service, Collaboration and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>coordination, and Business and workforce development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bedford County</td>
<td>Recreational Amenities, Public health and safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blair</td>
<td>Agriculture, Housing and Blight, Public health and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambria</td>
<td>safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fulton</td>
<td>Recreational Amenities, Agriculture,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huntingdon</td>
<td>Housing and Blight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somerset</td>
<td>Recreational Amenities, Housing and Blight</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Informed by extensive dialogue with residents, the plan listed four values and principles that were important to people throughout the region and should be considered when pursuing economic development initiatives.
Values:
- We value our families, our strong social connections, and our neighbors
- We value independence and self-reliance
- We value our natural resources and connections to the land
- We value our heritage and the sense of identity it provides

Principles:
- We value our families, our strong social connections, and our neighbors
- We value independence and self-reliance
- We value our natural resources and connections to the land
- We value our heritage and the sense of identity it provides

Description of Entities

SAP&DC: The Southern Alleghenies Planning & Development Commission (SAP&DC) is a non-profit regional economic and community development organization, serving the six South-Central Pennsylvania counties of Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Fulton, Huntingdon, and Somerset. SAP&DC is governed by a 19-member volunteer Board of Directors comprised of County Commissioners from each member county and representatives from the private sector. The Commission is exempt from Federal income tax under Section 501 (c) (4) of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). SAP&DC’s mission is “to address human resource development, encourage the creation and retention of jobs, and to improve the quality of life for residents of the Alleghenies.” It is located at 3 Sheraton Drive, Altoona, PA 16601.

The CARES Act: The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act is a federal economic relief package passed to protect the American people from the public health and economic impacts of COVID-19. The $2.2 trillion bill will be allocated through direct cash payments, unemployment benefits, small business loans, and federal aid to state and local governments. The CARES Act also provided the Economic Development Administration (EDA) with $1.5 billion for economic development assistance programs to help communities address issues related to the Coronavirus.

EDA: The U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) is a federal bureau under the U.S. Department of Commerce. The EDA has been tasked with implementing the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES Act) which includes $1.5 billion for “economic development assistance programs to help communities prevent, prepare for, and respond to Coronavirus.”

DRC: The Disaster Recovery Coordinator is responsible for developing and implementing SAP&DC’s economic recovery and resilience plan. The DRC will focus primarily on developing and enhancing broadband infrastructure to target unserved and underserved areas across the region. The expansion of broadband will ensure residents and businesses have reliable, high-speed internet access for remote learning, teleworking, telemedical, and business development activities. The contact information for the DRC is below:
Response Information & Estimated Project Timeline

1. **Closing Submission Date**: Responses must be submitted no later than **4:00 PM on March 19, 2021**. It is the responsibility of all Applicants to ensure that SAP&DC receives the proposal by the date and time specified above. Late proposals will not be considered.

2. **Submission Instructions**: Proposals should not exceed ten (10) pages in length and should be typed on 8.5 X 11-inch pages with margins no smaller than one (1) inch. Font size should be no smaller than ten (10) point. Supporting materials can be provided in addition to the scope of work. Proposals should be submitted in pdf format via email to Dustin Bishop at dbishop@sapdc.org.

3. **Submissions Assistance**: Questions regarding the RFP will also be addressed to the Disaster Recovery Coordinator mentioned above.

4. **Selection Date**: The responses will be referred to the Southern Alleghenies Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Committee for review and scoring. The Committee’s decision will serve as a recommendation of a firm to the SAP&DC Board of Directors, who will select a firm or team of firms on **May 26, 2021**.

5. **Anticipated Project Start Date**: SAP&DC anticipates entering a fully executed contract with the selected firm or team of firms by **June 1, 2021**.

6. **Completion of work**: SAP&DC expects the work to be completed and all deliverables received by **December 31, 2021**.

**Conditions of Response**
All costs incurred in the preparation of a proposal responding to this RFP will be the responsibility of the Applicant submitting the proposal and shall not be reimbursed by SAP&DC.

**Right to Reject**
SAP&DC reserves the right to reject any and all responses received in response to this RFP. A contract for the accepted proposal will be based upon the factors described in this RFP.
Small and/or Minority-Owned Businesses
Efforts will be made by SAP&DC to utilize small businesses and minority-owned businesses. An applicant qualifies as a small business firm if it meets the definition of “small business” as established by the Small Business Administration (13 CFR 121.201), by having average annual receipts for the last three fiscal years of less than six million dollars.

Notice of Decision
It is expected that a decision selecting the successful Applicant will be made no later than May 26, 2021. Upon conclusion of final negotiations with the successful Applicant, all other Applicants submitting proposals in response to this RFP will be informed, in writing, of the name of the successful Applicant.

Period of Performance
The anticipated period of performance for the project is June 1, 2021, through December 31, 2021.

Contract Information
1. Type of Contract: Fixed price.

2. Period of Performance: The period of performance for this program will be from June 1, 2021, through December 31, 2021.

3. Payment: Payment will be made when SAP&DC has determined that milestones have been completed in the approved scope of work. These milestones and the payment schedule will be negotiated with the selected firm prior to the start of work on the project.

4. Options: At the discretion of SAP&DC, this contract can be terminated at any time or extended beyond the specified contract period.

5. Confidentiality: The Subcontractor agrees to keep the information related to all contracts in confidence.
II. Response Guidelines

Response Outline

1. Understanding of Work to be Performed: Each Applicant should demonstrate its understanding of why the project is needed and how it will meet SAP&DC’s needs. Applicants should not repeat the Statement of Work, but rather describe how the Applicant will accomplish the tasks defined in the work program within the specified time limits.

2. Service Delivery Process: Each proposal must describe how the Applicant proposes to complete all tasks identified in the Statement of Work of this RFP. The Applicant must also include a timeline that demonstrates the completion of each task within the limits of the specified period of performance. The timeline should include project milestones that details the completion date of each task outlined in the Statement of Work.

3. Organizational Experience/Past Performance: Each Applicant should describe its organization, size (in relation to the proposed services to be performed), and structure. Indicate if appropriate if the Applicant is a small, minority-owned, or disadvantaged business enterprise (DBE). DBEs are certified by the Pennsylvania Unified Certification Program (PA UCP) in accordance with 49 CFR Part 26. The following information must be obtained from Applicants who maintain DBE status:
   a. Firm name;
   b. Firm address;
   c. Firm’s status as a DBE or non-DBE;
   d. Age of firm; and
   e. Annual gross receipts of the firm. Specifically indicate which gross receipts bracket your firm falls under:
      i. Less than $500,000
      ii. $500,000-$1 million
      iii. $1-$2 million
      iv. $2-$5 million
      v. Greater than $5 million

   The Applicant should also describe its prior experience that qualifies the Applicant to fulfill the tasks described in this RFP based on past performance of the same or similar programs. Include all prior experience with similar programs and the operation of programs financed by the Federal/State Government.

4. Staff Qualifications: To achieve the objectives outlined in the proposed scope of work, SAP&DC is seeking a qualified and innovative firm or collaborative team of firms with a demonstrated ability to perform the necessary technical assistance.
The selected Applicant must possess demonstrated experience in disaster recovery and resilience efforts, economic and community development, and other related topics.

Each Applicant shall identify all personnel that will be assigned to the project, including contact information. Each Applicant shall also describe the relevant qualifications of staff to perform the proposed service, including technical, educational, and experiential background. This section of the proposal should include descriptions of staff team makeup, overall supervision to be exercised, and prior experience of the individual staff team members.

- Statements of qualifications and resumes for project team members with specific mention of related projects including their role, specific knowledge, and experience.
- A list of at least three references and contacts from past or current client relationships involving similar projects.
- Descriptions of example projects that have resulted from the participation of an implementable planning process.
- An organization chart of the project team including identification of project manager, principal in charge, and known sub-consultant/contractor relationships.

5. **Project Budget & Cost Proposal**: All Applicants must submit their total project cost, along with a task-by-task cost breakdown for each of the major tasks defined within the Statement of Work of this RFP. Submitted proposals must reflect a total project cost **not to exceed $75,000**.

### Recovery and Resilience Plan Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RFP advertised</td>
<td>February 1, 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadline for interested firms to submit proposals</td>
<td>March 19, 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultant(s) selected</td>
<td>May 26, 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anticipated contract start date</td>
<td>June 1, 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Recovery and Resilience Plan complete</td>
<td>December 31, 2021</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
III. RESPONSE EVALUATION

Proposal Contents
All responses must follow the specified format and include all required elements listed in Section II of this RFP.

Ineligible Responses
Proposals may be judged ineligible and removed from further consideration if any of the following occur:
1. The response is not received timely in accordance with the terms of this RFP.
2. The response does not follow the specified format.
3. The response is not adequate for the reviewers to form a judgment that the proposed undertaking would comply with federal and state requirements.
4. The amount of the proposal exceeds the amount of funding available for the project.

Evaluation
Evaluation of each proposal will be based on the following criteria:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Criteria</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrated knowledge of resiliency, disaster recovery response, economic development research, and related subject areas.</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrated ability of the designated project director and key personnel to carry out the work as outlined.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost relative to the proposed scope of work.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrated ability to complete the scope of work within the period of performance.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequacy of the proposed scope of work to meet the needs of the regional planning effort.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>/100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>