

Request for Qualifications
City of Dowagiac
&
Mno Bmadsen

Project:

Dowagiac Business Partnership Center-Incubator Space Operator

South Front Street

Dowagiac, MI 49047

July 1, 2020

Table of Contents

1. Summary and Background
2. Proposal Guidelines
3. The Business Partnership Center
4. Project Purpose and Description
5. Project Scope
6. Request for Proposal and Project Timeline
7. Budget
8. Bidder Qualifications
9. Proposal Evaluation Criteria

1. Summary and Background

The City of Dowagiac, in partnership with Mno Bmadsen, has applied for a grant through the United States Economic Development Administration (EDA) to build the new Dowagiac Business Partnership Center on South Front Street in downtown Dowagiac. The City is accepting proposals to control and operate the incubator spaces in the new downtown office building for a period of 20 years.

The City of Dowagiac is a progressive small town in southern Michigan with an approximate population of 5,812. Over the past 20 years, the City has invested approximately \$200,000,000 in Dowagiac's private and public sector businesses to improve quality of life. This downtown office building will be the latest in municipal improvements in the City.

2. Proposal Guidelines

This RFQ represents the requirements for an open and competitive process. Proposals will be accepted until 5 p.m. on July 22, 2020. Any proposals received after this date and time will not be considered. All proposals must be signed by an official agent or representative of the company submitting the proposal.

Proposals received will be considered in correlation with filing for the EDA grant. If the grant is not awarded, no contracts will be awarded. Contract terms and conditions will be negotiated upon selection of the winning bidder for this RFQ. All contractual terms and conditions will be subject to review by the City's legal team and will include scope, budget, schedule, and other necessary items pertaining to the project.

3. The Business Partnership Center

The City of Dowagiac and Mno Bmadsen, the non-gaming investment arm of the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians, are applying for an EDA grant to build the "Dowagiac Business Partnership Center" downtown. This is latest project in a long-line of partnership between the two entities. The Dowagiac Business Partnership Center will have a focus towards business entrepreneurship and optimization in Dowagiac, with the potential to impact the southwest Michigan and northwest Indiana regions.

4. Project Purpose and Description

Project purpose:

Develop several incubator businesses in downtown Dowagiac within the new Dowagiac Business Partnership Center. The goal of the incubator businesses is to foster and support innovation and entrepreneurship for small business. The mission of the Dowagiac Business Partnership Center is to inspire and facilitate investment in the expansion of existing businesses and planting of new businesses through attraction of business talent and the application of best practices. Its vision is to become a well-known epicenter of progressive business success; fostering additional investment and job creation, and enhancing the quality of life for all who live in Dowagiac.

Project description:

Small business is supported and encouraged by City administration and City Council in Dowagiac. In partnership with Mno Bmadsen and the EDA, the creation of the Business Partnership Center will create an environment in which start-up business can prosper and grow, offering opportunities to grow and foster new business.

5. Project Scope

The scope of this project includes all design, development, permitting, licensing and financing of the incubator business space. There will be dedicated area in the Business Partnership Center to support ground-floor incubator spaces in the heart of downtown Dowagiac.

The selected bidder will be responsible for recruiting, developing and operating the incubator business space within the Dowagiac Business Partnership Center. The operator will work in coordination with the building's owners, the City of Dowagiac and Mno Bmadsen.

6. Request for Qualifications and Project Timeline

RFQ timeline:

All proposals in response to this RFQ are due no later than 5 p.m. EST on July 22, 2020.

Evaluation of proposals will be conducted the week of July 27-31, 2020. If additional information or discussions are needed with any bidders during this period, if the bidder(s) will be notified.

The selection decision for the winning bidder will be made in accordance with EDA grant approval.

Project timeline:

The project is expected to begin in coordination with the completion of the new Dowagiac Business Partnership Center.

7. Budget

The operator will be responsible for developing a budget for the incubator spaces and determining a market-rate lease for incubator businesses.

8. Bidder Qualifications

Bidders should provide the following items as part of their proposal for consideration:

- Description of experience in planning, building, and operating a small business incubator.
- Provide a model for potential new jobs created within 5, 10, and 20 year horizons within the sectors of manufacturing, professional and consumer services, and commercial retail.
- Examples of other incubator projects, in which you have served as the operator or manager.
- References of businesses that have used incubator space you have operated.
- Anticipated square footage needed for each incubator business.
- Operations/business plan.

- Timeframe to hire and begin incubator spaces.
- Project management methodology.

9. Proposal Evaluation Criteria

The City of Dowagiac will evaluate all proposals. To ensure consideration for this RFQ, your proposal should be complete and include all of the following criteria:

- Overall proposal suitability: Proposed solution(s) must meet the scope and needs included herein and should be presented in a clear and organized manner.
- Organizational experience: Bidders will be evaluated on their experience as it pertains to the scope of this project.
- Previous work: Bidders will be evaluated on examples of their work pertaining to incubator space design and operation, as well as references.
- Value and cost: Bidders will be evaluated on the feasibility of the proposed incubator business plan, along with costs of operation.
- Technical expertise and experience: Bidders must provide descriptions and documentation of technical expertise and experience.
- The operator can provide reasonable evidence that it has sufficient capital to fund improvements and proposed business operation.

Each bidder must submit three (3) copies of their proposal to the address below by 5 p.m. EST on July 22, 2020.

Attn: Natalie Dean, Dowagiac Assistant City Manager
241 S. Front Street, P.O. Box 430
Dowagiac, MI 49047
Email: NDean@dowagiac.org
Phone: 269.782.0437