



TOWN OF MIDDLEBURG, VIRGINIA

November 4, 2016

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION FOR

COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY & EXECUTION PLAN CONSULTING SERVICES

To: All Interested Economic Development Consultants

Re: Request for Information

The Town of Middleburg Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC) is requesting information from interested partners on development of a five- (5) year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy & Execution Plan (CEDSEP).

The EDAC invites all interested parties to submit an electronic response to this Request for Information (RFI). This RFI is being sought strictly for the purpose of gaining knowledge of services available to provide technical assistance recommendations, capacity building activities and administrative guidelines to support the on-going formulation and implementation of the CEDSEP with a special emphasis on branding & marketing, business development, business retention and expansion, and business formation. The RFI seeks to identify an estimate of their corresponding costs and should not be construed as intent, commitment, or promise to acquire services, supplies, or solutions offered.

No contract will result from any response to this RFI. Information submitted in response to this RFI will become the property of The Town of Middleburg. The EDAC will not pay for any information herein requested nor is it liable for any costs incurred by any respondent. We appreciate your response to this request.

POINT OF CONTACT

The information gleaned from this RFI will be used by EDAC and Town economic development staff. For the purposes of this RFI, the Economic Development Coordinator will be the point of contact. Please refer all inquiries to:

Cindy Pearson, Economic Development Coordinator
Town of Middleburg
P. O. Box 187
Middleburg, Virginia 20118
Phone: (540) 687-5152
Email: economicdevelopment@middleburgva.gov

Any RFI addenda/updates will be made available on the Town's website www.middleburgva.gov. Questions must be submitted in writing.

PERTINENT DATES/SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Final questions must be submitted no later than noon on November 16, 2016.

Submissions must be submitted by 4:00 pm on November 21, 2016 to:

Town of Middleburg (via USPS)
P. O. Box 187
Middleburg, Virginia 20118
Attn: CEDSEP RFI Response

Town of Middleburg (via delivery service)
10 West Marshall Street
Middleburg, Virginia 20117
Attn: CEDSEP RFI Response

Town of Middleburg (via email)
economicdevelopment@middleburgva.gov
Subject: CEDSEP RFI Response

BACKGROUND

History. The Town of Middleburg, population about 800, is an historic village located less than one hour from Washington, DC in the scenic and historic Northern Piedmont of Virginia. Tourists flock to Middleburg to browse among the delightful array of quaint shops and inns and to attend our many arts events and festivals.

Since the 1730s, Middleburg had been a staging point for weary travelers along the Ashby Gap Road. The legacy of the colonial era continues today at Middleburg's lodging establishments that provide first rate accommodations to visitors from around the world. The oldest is the historic Red Fox Inn and Tavern, billed as the "oldest original inn in America". The newest is the 340-acre, 168-room luxury Salamander Spa and Resort, opened in 2013 by Salamander Hotels and Resorts, whose CEO is noted philanthropist and businesswoman Sheila Johnson.

After the turn of the century, Middleburg began welcoming a new wave of visitors that descended on the town for foxhunting and steeplechase races. The charming village soon earned a reputation as the "Nation's Horse and Hunt Capital," attracting prominent visitors from across the United States. The Town today continues to welcome visitors from the DC region, the nation and the world to enjoy its unique local shops, fine restaurants, and special events, as well as wineries and equestrian facilities in the surrounding countryside.

The Town's entire commercial area is contained within a State and National Register Historic District. Middleburg was recognized in 2008 for its historic preservation efforts by being designated a Preserve America Community by then-First Lady Laura Bush.

Downtown Business & Non-Profit Organizations. The Town has an active business organization, the Middleburg Business and Professional Association (MBPA), with about 115 members. The mission of the organization is to promote, enhance and support local businesses and represent their interests in the community and beyond. Their goals are “to implement beneficial marketing and advertising effort; to promote Middleburg as a destination; to provide representation and a voice with elected officials; and to provide communication between members and assist new businesses”. The MBPA sponsors a monthly networking/business meeting called the Biz Buzz that routinely attracts 75-100 attendees. There is also an active Middleburg Arts Council which, in cooperation with the Middleburg Arts Project, sponsors arts-related events throughout the year.

The Town supports these organizations with staff and limited financial support. The Economic Development Advisory Committee was created in 2015 to provide advice to the Town on economic development programs. The Committee includes representation from the Town’s retail, office and non-profit sectors, as well as the Town Council, and is staffed by the Town’s Economic Development Coordinator.

TOPICAL AREAS FOR RFI RESPONSE

The response to this RFI should address the strategies and tactics to be developed from the CEDSEP process, to include but not be limited to:

- A. Develop an integrated branding strategy for Middleburg.
- B. Conduct a stakeholder analysis to determine current participation in Middleburg’s economic development activities.
- C. Analyze existing business mix.
- D. Analyze existing physical infrastructure and identify opportunities for improvement to attract and retain businesses.
- E. Analyze current industry clusters in Middleburg and Western Loudoun. Identify key industries and their market locations for targeted attraction efforts regionally. Conduct updated retail market analysis.
- F. Human Capital Development – identify existing workforce and develop strategies to attract and sustain an improved talent base and skilled workforce to support CEDSEP.
- G. Prepare business retention and expansion analysis and action plan.
- H. Position Middleburg as a leading destination for growing independent businesses.
- I. Develop recommendations for a business development and entrepreneurial support system.
- J. Identify local, regional and statewide partnerships that can be leveraged to meet the goals set out in the CEDSEP.
- K. Analyze the Town’s current economic development program, including organizational structure and staffing, and make recommendations to improve program efficiency and effectiveness.
- L. Development of a dashboard with baseline data to measure the various aspects of all economic development initiatives and their overall effectiveness year over year.

RESPONSE FORMAT

Consultants are asked to respond in a straightforward and concise manner, with specific information provided to address the topical areas for the CEDSEP effort. Please provide:

1. A transmittal letter
2. Brief history of your firm and description of past experiences providing similar services.
3. Response to Topical Areas for RFI Response above.
4. Any elements necessary to complete the CEDSEP that you believe we have not identified.
5. Estimated time frame for completion of these services.
6. Any other information which may assist the Town in drafting a Request for Proposals for these services.