



Augusta Economic Development

Georgia's Business Address

DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF AUGUSTA, GA

Request for Proposals
For
Comprehensive Labor Analysis

Augusta MSA Region

August Economic Development Authority

1450 Greene Street

Suite 560

Augusta, GA 30901

Cal Wray, Executive Director

706-284-5610

September 3, 2019

The Augusta Economic Development Authority is requesting proposals from interested, highly-qualified firms to conduct a comprehensive labor analysis of the Augusta MSA, its labor shed area, and the surrounding region along with our strategic partners the Development Authority of Columbia County, GA and the Economic Development Partnership of Aiken, Edgefield, & Saluda (referred to as AEDA in this document for simplicity).

The successful proposer will work directly with the AEDA for all activities involved with the project. The following activities and/or deliverables are to be included in the study, consistent with the Scope of Work as detailed:

Analysis Activities and Scope of Work:

- Initial Scope and Document Reviews and Meetings with Staff
- Distribution of Any Questionnaires in the community
- Analysis and Data Review
- Community Interviews
- Employer interviews to determine skills, wages, shift differentials, commuting distances, benefits, turnover, absenteeism, etc.
- Benchmarking with a recommended peer list by the selected firm after consultation with the AEDA
- Investigate and document the demographics of the area labor force
- Determine the availability of a quality workforce to support hiring needs associated with existing employers, as well as to prospective employers considering locations in the area.
- Study and evaluate the influence of Fort Gordon and the Savannah River Site (SRS) in terms of potential impacts on the local labor pool, as well as its role as a source of white-collar and blue-collar employment in the region.
- Profile the following workforce characteristics:
 - Identify the labor shed that constitutes the primary draw area
 - Overall growth in the labor force, participation, and unemployment rates
 - Demographic and economic characteristics
 - Wage comparison with other areas against which the Augusta MSA and its surrounding region compete.
 - Educational attainment/college enrollment (with a focus on area institutions of higher learning and on-going role in economic development)
 - Projections of future labor force
 - Occupational structure and its implications for future business development
- Veterans Inventory
 - Document unique characteristics of this group
 - Consideration for retirees, family members of military personnel, and civilian population that is employed by the industries dependent on the military
 - Profile participation and unemployment rates, skill levels, educational attainment, commuting patterns, and wage requirements of these populations, when possible.

- Savannah River Site (SRS)
 - Document unique characteristics of this group
 - Consideration for retirees, family members of SRS staff, and others that are impacted by changes at SRS
 - Profile participation and unemployment rates, skill levels, educational attainment, commuting patterns, and wage requirements for this population, if possible.
- Recommendations by the team for leveraging the Augusta MSA and the surrounding region workforce including:
 - Business retention, expansion, and recruitment
 - Leveraging area educational institutions
 - Small business and entrepreneurial development
 - Branding and marketing strategies

Analysis Study Deliverables:

- Comprehensive Final report including steps used in the process, data, and recommendations
- Public Roll out of information consisting of, at a minimum a public presentation of the final report to a selection of community leaders. A plan on how this would be handled will strengthen a proposal.

The AEDA will receive proposals from firms having experience and qualifications in comprehensive labor analysis. For consideration, proposals must contain evidence of the proposer’s experience and abilities in the specified area and other disciplines directly related to the proposed services. All proposers shall provide profiles and resumes of the staff to be assigned to the program.

The AEDA intends to select one firm to provide this service. The AEDA reserves the right to waive any and all requirements for this proposal process.

Introduction/Background

Augusta is Georgia’s second-largest city, and it’s the second-oldest city in the State. With more than 600,000 residents, the Augusta area has a variety of amenities, including a vibrant arts community. The area offers its residents a beautiful historic area with a diverse culture, active arts community, mild climate, and low cost of living.

The area is home to a thriving medical community, many educational institutions, Fort Gordon Army Installation, Savannah River Site, and a large manufacturing base. These have all led to many employment opportunities and one of the most diverse economies in the country.

Its strategic location on I-20 offers quick access to both Atlanta, GA, Charlotte, NC and Savannah, GA (Port of Savannah and Port of Charleston). The growth within the communities encompassing the Augusta MSA is leading to dramatic changes including an all-time high for employment which is one of the reasons for the undertaking of a comprehensive labor analysis for the region.

Current estimates for the MSA include the following:

Augusta-Richmond County:	206,785
Aiken County:	174,183
Columbia County:	158,412
Edgefield County:	28,091
Burke County:	25,072
McDuffie County:	22,045
<u>Lincoln County:</u>	<u>8,190</u>
Augusta MSA Total Population:	622,778

Labor studies in the past 10 years have included analysis of the healthcare and technology industries within the community. These will be provided to the successful proposer.

Industrial locations have happened swiftly over the last five (5) years and an analysis of the availability of labor, skills gaps, and necessary programs is needed for continued growth. Recent locations and existing industry expansions include:

Year	Company	Investment	Jobs	New/Existing
2015	AmbioPharm	\$18,800,000	100	Existing
2015	ADP	\$20,000,000	450	Existing
2015	GIW Minerals	\$37,000,000	53	Existing
2015	Bennett Distribution	\$24,000,000	67	Existing
2015	Solvay Specialty Polymers	\$100,000,000	45	Existing
2015	Kellogg	\$40,000,000	95	Existing
2016	AGY	\$30,000,000	80	Existing
2016	Autoneum	\$35,500,000	41	Existing
2016	Textron EZ-GO	\$49,000,000	400	Existing
2016	EDTS	\$4,000,000	31	Existing
2016	Teleperformance	\$3,000,000	100	Existing
2017	Stephen Gamble Floors	\$2,500,000	25	New
2017	Emerson	\$8,000,000	86	Existing
2017	Carlstar	\$6,900,000	43	Existing
2017	BAE	\$8,400,000	120	Existing
2017	AmbioPharm	\$18,000,000	100	Existing
2017	Control	N/A	15	New
2017	Trinity Logistics	N/A	15	New
2017	Serta	N/A	70	Existing

2017	World Class Industries	\$2,000,000	15	New
2017	Starbucks	\$120,000,000	100	Existing
2017	Solvay Specialty Polymers	\$52,000,000	10	Existing
2018	Green Energy BioFuels	\$4,300,000	40	New
2018	Zeus	\$15,700,000	51	Existing
2018	Strand	N/A	20	Existing
2018	Rec Tec	TBD	53	New
2018	Club Car	\$36,000,000	100	Existing
2018	Manus Bio	\$20,000,000	50	New
2018	Graphic Packaging	\$350,000,000	TBD	Existing
2018	Union Agener	\$35,000,000	125	New
2018	Burning Castle, LLC	TBD	50	New
2019	AIT	\$12,000,000	45	New
2019	FPL Foods	TBD	100	Existing
2019	Premier Packaging	\$1,000,000	15	New
2019	Solvay Specialty Polymers	\$350,000,000	TBD	Existing
2019	Sitel	\$1,000,000	350	Existing
2019	Parsons Corporation	TBD	25	New
2019	BAE Systems	TBD	15	New
2019	Electrolux Augusta Call Center	TBD	30	Existing
2019	John Deere	TBD	90	Existing
2019	FL Smidth	\$15,000,000	130(retained)	Existing

In addition, tremendous activity is taking place by companies looking to establish new facilities in the area. For 2019, we have had the following activity (more data will be made available to the selected firm to use in their analysis):

Richmond County: 53 Industrial/Cyber Prospects representing the potential creation of 6,114 jobs

Columbia County: 23 Industrial/Cyber Prospects

Aiken County: 30 Industrial/Cyber Prospects

Proposed Schedule

<u>Event/Milestone</u>	<u>Date</u>
Release of RFP	September 3, 2019
Deadline for Notice of Intent to Submit Proposal	September 18, 2019
Deadline for all questions to be submitted	September 25, 2019
Responses to all questions to be returned	October 2, 2019
Deadline for Proposal Submittals	3:00 p.m. EDT, October 18, 2019
Preliminary Evaluations Complete	Week of October 21, 2019
Presentations by Finalists	Week of October 28, 2019
Final Selection	November 8, 2019
Project Start	November 17, 2019

Questions regarding this proposal may be directed to Cal Wray, President at 706-284-5610 or cwray@augustaeda.org.

Proposal Response/Submittal Requirements

- Background, ownership, and history of your organization. Please include length of time in business, number of years performing related work, and recent labor analysis your firm has conducted.
- Describe your team's project management approach and communication strategy with the AEDA in the process. Describe how periodic updates will be handled to share progress and milestones.
- Location of your principal office and the location of the office that will be responsible for fulfilling the terms of the contract.
- Provide information on each staff member that will be assigned to the project. Information should include:
 - Name
 - Credentials (degrees, certifications, etc.)
 - Years of Experience
 - Years with the organization
 - Previous projects assigned within the past three years
- Statement of Methods and Procedures: Provide a statement describing the scope of work as you understand it. Provide a detailed plan to achieve the necessary requirements and plan for accomplishing the work. This plan should describe the approach, methodology, and procedures to be employed to gather the data, analyze findings, and develop recommendations.
- Work Schedule: Provide a timeline indicating tasks required and the anticipated completion date based on a November 17, 2019 begin date for the project. The timeline should include specific milestones.

- Provide detailed cost of services in a separate correspondence to cwray@augustaeda.org.
Costings should include:
 - Fixed prices, including out-of-pocket expense, for all costs associated within the scope of this proposal.
 - Detailed hourly rates of all members of the project
 - Additional billable costs for non-specified tasks
 - Total fees and expenses for the entire scope of the project
 - **Any area which proposers believe should be included in the scope of work in this proposal, but which is not stipulated in the RFP, and identify the costs associated with the services rendered pursuant to this proposed expansion of the scope of work set forth in this RFP.**
 - Submission of References – Submit three (3) references for agencies for whom your firm has performed similar studies. The reference information must include the following:
 - Name of Agency
 - Contact person and telephone number
 - Summary of work performed
 - Including hyperlinks to any publicly available examples of work

Submittal of Documents

Proposer shall submit proposal no later than October 18, 2019 by 3:00 p.m. EDT to cwray@augustaeda.org. The detailed cost of services information must be provided separate from the remainder of the proposal by the same deadline. **The AEDA will not be responsible for the payment of any expenses incurred as a result of responding to the request for proposals.**

All Proposals must be signed by an officer or employee having authority to bind the company.

Title VII Compliance

Each firm submitting a proposal assures the AEDA that it is in compliance with Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, as amended, in that the firm does not, on the grounds of race, color, national origins, religion, sex, age, handicap, or marital status, discriminate in any form or manner against its employees. The firm understands and agrees that this service is conditioned upon the veracity of this Statement of Assurance.

Undue Influence

The proposer declares and warrants that no undue influence or pressure is used against or in concert with any officer or employee of the AEDA in connection with the award or terms of the agreement that will be executed as a result of the RFP, including any method of coercion, confidential financial arrangement, or financial document. No officer or employee of the AEDA will receive compensation, directly or indirectly, from the vendor, or from any officer, employee or agent of the vendor, in connection with the award of the agreement of any work to be conducted as a result of the RFP. Violation of this section shall be a material breach of the agreement/contract entitling the AEDA to any and all remedies by law or in equity.

Proposal Evaluation and Selection

The various significant factors that will be considered in the evaluation of proposals are summarized below. The AEDA's final selection will not be dictated on any single factor, including price. The relative importance of these factors involves judgment on the part of the AEDA's RFP team and will include both objective and subjective analysis.

The evaluation criteria listed below are listed in random sequence and are not considered in any rank or order of importance:

- Demonstrated understanding of the service requested,
- Prior experience in performing similar projects
- Qualification of the Consultant and assigned project staff,
- Overall project methodology/approach,
- Timeline for completion/proposed schedule,
- Fees/Cost
- Reference checks

The AEDA may conduct interviews with the most qualified respondents. The AEDA shall not be obligated to accept the lowest priced proposal but will make an award in the best interests of the AEDA after all factors have been evaluated. Upon completion of the evaluation process, the most qualified consultant will be contacted to finalize a Scope of Work and related terms of an agreement. The AEDA shall enter into a Professional Services Agreement with the selected Consultant.

The AEDA reserves the right to reject any and all proposals should it be deemed in its best interest to do so. A consultant may be eliminated from consideration for failure to comply with any of the requirements, depending upon the critical nature of such requirement. Late submissions will not be considered.

Proposals will be screened, and the top candidate(s) will be selected. The qualifications for the top candidates will be verified and references may be checked. In reviewing the proposals, the AEDA will carefully weigh the firm's comprehension of the Scope of Services and AEDA's needs, qualifications and experience on relevant projects and the fee proposal/value to the AEDA. The award of the contract will not be based solely on price but on a combination of all the above factors.

The AEDA retains sole discretion to evaluate proposals and make an award to the firm the AEDA deems to have the most responsive proposal. Receipt of proposals in response to its RFP does not obligate the AEDA in any way to engage any consultant and the AEDA reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, wholly or in part, at any time, without penalty. The AEDA shall retain the right to abandon a proposal process at any time prior to actual execution of a contract with no financial or other responsibility in the event of such abandonment. The AEDA reserves the right to negotiate all final terms and conditions of the agreements entered.

All quotes, inquiries, responses, or correspondence related to or in reference to this RFP, and all reports, charts, displays, schedules, exhibits, and other documentation submitted by the consultant will become property of the AEDA and a matter of public record. Written requests for clarification or additional information must be emailed to Cal Wray at cwray@augustaeda.org no later than September 25, 2019. Respondents should clearly understand that only official answers or positions of the AEDA will be ones stated in writing. Any changes to this RFP by the AEDA will be sent to each firm or individual from whom a Notice of Intent has been received. Such changes become an integral part of the RFP for incorporation into any contract awarded pursuant to the RFP. Upon final selection of the firm, the scope of service may be modified and refined during negotiations with the AEDA.

Contract Requirements

It is recognized that the formal basis of any agreement between the AEDA and the selected firm is a contract rather than a proposal. In submitting price quotes, firms must indicate that they are prepared to complete a contract containing all the information submitted in their price quote. The price quote will become part of the contract between the AEDA and the successful firm.