

Technical Planning Services in Support of the New Jersey State Development & Redevelopment Plan, the Office of Planning Advocacy, and the Cross-Acceptance process for multiple counties including but not limited to Atlantic, Bergen, Cape May, Cumberland, Essex, Hudson, Hunterdon, Middlesex, Monmouth, Morris, Ocean, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, Union, and Warren.

## Introduction

### Summary and Purpose

The Office of Planning Advocacy (OPA), within the New Jersey Department of State, Business Action Center, is seeking bids from qualified planning firms to provide planning support services to OPA and multiple counties, including but not limited to Atlantic, Bergen, Cape May, Cumberland, Essex, Hudson, Hunterdon, Middlesex, Monmouth, Morris, Ocean, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, Union, and Warren. The planning departments in these counties and OPA have limited staffing resources, which necessitates planning consultant assistance to satisfactorily complete a variety of planning initiatives and requirements. OPA will contract with the selected firm(s) to support said planning activities managed by each of the county planning departments or OPA. The tasks pertinent to this Request for Bids (RFB) are primarily geared toward the on-going effort to finalize, adopt, and implement the New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP). This effort includes a process known as the Cross-Acceptance, which includes municipal outreach, reviewing county and municipal master plans for consistency with the State Development and Redevelopment Plan, and conducting negotiations between OPA and the counties. Other tasks will include assisting OPA staff with reconciling Cross-Acceptance Response Template (CART) submissions, reviewing mapping and policy agreements and disagreements, and editing the SDRP for final approval and adoption. This work is anticipated to take place between April 2025 and June 2026. OPA prefers to contract with one (1) or more firms (with any subcontractors) to perform these services.

### Background

The Office of Planning Advocacy is the administrative support to the State Planning Commission (the "Commission"). Authorized pursuant to the State Planning Act, N.J.S.A. 52:18A-196 et seq (the "Act"), the Commission is tasked with developing and updating the State Development and Redevelopment Plan (the "Plan" or the "SDRP"). The Preliminary State Development and Redevelopment Plan can be viewed at [https://nj.gov/state/bac/planning/documents/update-to-state-plan/Draft%20Preliminary%20SDRP%20\(SPC%20Approved%2012.4.2024\).pdf](https://nj.gov/state/bac/planning/documents/update-to-state-plan/Draft%20Preliminary%20SDRP%20(SPC%20Approved%2012.4.2024).pdf). OPA implements the goals of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan and integrates that planning with administrative and State agency programs and priorities to achieve comprehensive, long-term planning at all levels of government and the private sector. OPA also pursues other activities to improve intergovernmental coordination and cooperation as defined by the State Planning Act.

### Contact Information

Walter Lane

Acting Executive Director, Office of Planning Advocacy

Email: [Walter.Lane@sos.nj.gov](mailto:Walter.Lane@sos.nj.gov)

## Intent, Scope of Work, and Deliverables

### Summary

All tasks outlined in the contract will be conducted under the direction of OPA staff or the designated county planning director(s). The SDRP Related Tasks are described below (anticipated April 2025 - June 2026). More information can be accessed at:

<https://nj.gov/state/bac/planning/state-plan/development/>.

1. Meet with each county planning department's director and staff or OPA (as appropriate) to review both the county's and the municipalities' master plans and related land use documents for consistency and provide agreements and disagreements with the Preliminary State Plan as part of the Cross-Acceptance Response Template (CART) for each participating jurisdiction.
2. Working in concert with the county planning directors and staff or OPA (as the negotiating entities), review and compile all response templates (for both the county and its municipalities) and prepare one CART, which includes a Statement of Agreements and Disagreements, for submission to the Office of Planning Advocacy. This will likely entail attending multiple meetings for the Cross-Acceptance process, such as municipal board meetings, public meetings, and negotiation sessions.
3. Working in concert with OPA staff to reconcile submitted CARTs, including but not limited to mapping and policy items, create a list of agreements and disagreements to be used during the negotiation phase of Cross-Acceptance.
4. Working in concert with the county planning directors and staff or OPA, submit a Negotiating Agenda, which will form the basis of the negotiating sessions between the negotiating entity and the State Planning Commission (SPC). The agenda should state the issues being presented, proposed alternatives, and provide direct citations of pertinent State Plan provision wherever possible. Participate in the meetings scheduled by the Office of Planning Advocacy and the negotiating entity to work through the agreements and disagreements.
5. Provide assistance and guidance to the Office of Planning Advocacy and counties (negotiating entities) to cooperatively complete the requirements of the Cross-Acceptance process.
6. Provide document-editing services to prepare the SDRP for final State Planning Commission approval and adoption. Editing services include, but are not limited to, reviewing the document for grammar, spelling, punctuation, consistency, clarity, and overall style. This can also include fact-checking, formatting, and suggestions on content and tone to improve the overall quality and readability of the plan.
7. Provide technical assistance and policy guidance to OPA staff to support the adoption of the final SDRP as well as cooperatively implement the SDRP after final approval and adoption. This includes but is not limited to mapping services such as creating GIS polygons for the SDRP Map's Planning Areas, Centers, and Nodes to reflect changes agreed to in Cross-acceptance. All GIS work must meet OPA and industry standards.

## Qualifications

1. Knowledge of the New Jersey SDRP, the Cross-Acceptance Manual, Cross-Acceptance process, the Cross-Acceptance Response Template, and Cross-Acceptance negotiations. Prior experience with SDRP Cross-Acceptance preferred.
2. A strong understanding of New Jersey's land use regulations and smart growth principles.
3. Project teams must include a minimum of one (1) Licensed New Jersey Professional Planner (PP).
4. Evidence of planning and delivering inclusive public outreach processes.
5. Capacity to be responsive to multiple counties' needs and to deliver tasks in a timely manner.
6. Strong communications skills and experience preparing and editing planning documents.

## RFP Proposal Requirements

### Cover Letter

Please submit a **Cover Letter** from a principal of the Respondent, providing summary of proposed solution of the project, along with primary contact information (phone number and email address).

### Project Team Description

Please submit a **Project Team Description** including qualifications, relevant experience, and contact information for each team member. Please identify the project manager, key personnel, and any sub-consultants, and include an organizational chart of the project team, if available. If team of consultants, explain how team may have previously worked together.

### Detailed Summary of Experience

1. Provide a **Detailed Summary of Experience** that is directly related to the Scope of Services.
2. List relevant experience. This should include past projects, timeframes of delivery, explanations of any significant delays, and lessons learned.
3. Provide resumes **max (2) pages** each for key staff member to be assigned to the project.
4. Include a list of municipalities by county for which the firm contributed to the preparation of Master Plans, Master Plan Updates, and Master Plan reexaminations, dating back to the year 2020.
5. Include **minimum of three (3) and up to five (5) references** and contact information, listing the project conducted and the year(s) it was conducted.

### Proposal Narrative

Please submit a **Proposal Narrative** providing sufficiently detailed information of project methods and discussion of the proposed approach to the tasks outlined in the RFP.

### Detailed Project Schedule

Please submit a **Detailed Project Schedule** outlining the Respondent's proposed sequence of activities.

### Project Cost Proposal

Respondents must provide a detailed project cost estimate for conducting the tasks outline in the Scope of Work section, including a comprehensive rate/fee schedule for each proposed team member. **There is a firm budget of up to \$175,000 for this proposal.**

The Cost Proposal must include a price and level of effort for the Scope of Work the Consultant has described in their technical proposal. A list of key personnel arranged by title and level with hourly rates shall be included in the cost proposal.