



REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

25-03
January 8, 2025

Ventura Council of Governments (VCOG)
Regional Early Action Planning (REAP) 2.0
Subregional Partnership Program (SRP)
Task 6

Planning Technical Assistance

VCOG intends to award up to three consultant contracts to establish a bench of qualified planning consultants to provide task-defined planning services for up to 11 VCOG jurisdictions related to infill affordable housing, Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) reduction, and Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH). All deliverables must be completed by June 30, 2026. Please refer to the Scope of Services description.

IMPORTANT DATES

January 8, 2024 – RFQ ISSUED

January 29, 2025 – SOQ DUE

February 3-NLT 17, 2025 – SELECTION AND CONTRACTS

NLT February 17, 2025 – NOTICE TO PROCEED

JUNE 30, 2026 - COMPLETION

VCOG Contact: Program Manager Dr. Chris Williamson, AICP
cbwplans@gmail.com 213-509-1213

Planning Technical Assistance

INTRODUCTION

The Ventura Council of Governments (VCOG), a California Joint Powers Authority consisting of 11 jurisdictions¹, is soliciting this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to identify and contract with one or more consultants to provide Technical Assistance (TA) to implement VCOG's Regional Early Action Planning (REAP) 2.0 , Task 4.3 "On-Call Technical Assistance for General Planning Efforts." VCOG will select and contract with up to three planning consultants to be available to one or more of the 11 Ventura County jurisdictions beginning in February, 2025. The services provided would be consistent with Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) REAP 2.0 guidelines and consultants' services must be linked to the implementation to a program within each jurisdictions' respective 2021-2029 Housing Element.

Per the terms of the Contract all studies, surveys, data, notes, computer files, reports, records, documents and other materials (the "documents and materials") prepared by Consultant, its employees, subcontractors and agents in the performance of this Agreement shall be the property of VCOG and shall be delivered to VCOG upon request of the Project Manager or upon the termination of this Agreement. Consultant shall have no claim for further employment or additional compensation because of the exercise by VCOG of its full rights of ownership use, reuse, or assignment of the documents and materials hereunder.

VCOG intends to award up to three contracts depending on which VCOG cities/county request assistance, geographic and/or jurisdiction situations, and/or consultants' experience and abilities. The work will be task-defined work with city/county planning staff. Deliverables must be completed and submitted by June 30, 2026, the ending date of the REAP 2.0 program. The total budget is \$145,000.

RFQ/SELECTION/NTP SCHEDULE

1/8/2025	RFQ Release by email and post on solicitation websites
1/20/2025	Send interest email to cbwplans@gmail.com by 5:00 PM Pacific Time Written questions due to cbwplans@gmail.com by 5:00 PM Pacific Time
1/22/2025	Replies to questions during Bidders ZOOM meeting, 1 hour, 10:00 AM PST Summary of questions, answers, and zoom call sent if requested.
1/29/2025	SOQ document due to cbwplans@gmail.com by 5:00 PM PST
2/3-16/2025	Possible Zoom interviews at VCOG discretion. Selections and noticing, send VCOG contract. Execute contract
2/17/2025	Target for Notice to Proceed

VCOG has attempted to provide all information available to respond to this RFQ. It is the responsibility of each Respondent to review, evaluate, and, where necessary, request clarification prior to submission. If any person contemplating submitting a response to this RFQ is in doubt as to the true meaning of any part of the solicitation documents attached hereto or finds discrepancies in or omissions from the specifications, they must submit a **written request for clarification/interpretation to VCOG REAP Project Manager Chris Williamson via email at cbwplans@gmail.com by 5:00 P.M PST January 20, 2025 and/or participate in a bidders Zoom meeting on January 22, 2025 at 10 am.** Questions and responses would be provided to all parties by January 23, 2025. VCOG does not guarantee receipt by Respondent of post-RFQ information: it is the responsibility of each Respondent to periodically check with the Grant Manager.

¹ Ventura, Oxnard, Port Hueneme, Camarillo, Thousand Oaks, Moorpark, Simi Valley, Ojai, Fillmore, Santa Paula, and Ventura County

BACKGROUND

REAP 2.0 is a flexible grant program that will accelerate progress towards state housing goals and climate commitments through a strengthened partnership between the state, its regions, and local entities. **REAP 2.0 funds will accelerate infill housing development, reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), increase housing supply at all affordability levels, affirmatively further fair housing (AFFH), and facilitate the implementation of adopted regional and local plans to achieve these goals.** REAP 2.0 is administered by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) in collaboration with the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR), the Strategic Growth Council (SGC), and the California Air Resources Board (CARB). Refer to <https://www.hcd.ca.gov/grants-and-funding/programs-active/regional-early-action-planning-grants-of-2021> for additional information.

A share of statewide REAP 2.0 funding is allocated to SCAG which, in turn, allocated funds to COGs to create and implement a Subregional Partnership Program to assist cities and counties in implementing their respective 2021-2029 Housing Element programs that meet the three REAP 2.0 criteria of: 1) infill, 2) AFFH, and 3) reducing VMT. VCOG and SCAG have established this Technical and Design Assistance project focused on housing element programs common to the 11 jurisdictions. VCOG staff reviewed the 11 housing elements with 281 programs and identified several common programs, stated in different ways, to amend zoning code and related ordinances, adjust permitting procedures, and amend plans with the general goal of fostering affordable housing and ADU's.

VCOG has invited planning staffs to submit planning TA requests. VCOG will then create a task order, budget, and schedule for the bench consultant. **VCOG anticipates six (6) participating jurisdictions and has a total budget of \$145,000, suggesting relatively concise projects of about \$25,000 each that are completed within one year.** The consultant's interaction is expected to be primarily with planning staff. Outreach with the public, owners, and/or tenants is at the discretion of the jurisdiction.

SCOPE OF SERVICES AND DELIVERABLES

Eligible activities under technical assistance must demonstrate a clear and significant nexus to all REAP 2.0 objectives. Projects must result in implementable/adoptable programs or policies (meaning subject to adoption or approval of the legislative body) required to meet the programs, projects, and commitments in draft, adopted, and/or compliant 6th cycle Housing Elements. Legislative action must be taken by June 2026. Example services are, but limited to:

Affordable Housing development programs – eligible uses if the programs accelerate the supply of long-term Affordable Housing for Lower-Income and Moderate-Income Households in Infill areas, remove barriers to encourage development and commit to development within a reasonable time frame (e.g., within 5 years of the expenditure deadline). Affordable Housing developments can include mixed-uses (e.g., a minimum of 65 percent total floor area is residential use).

Rezoning and guiding development by updating planning documents, development standards, and zoning ordinances, including general plans, community plans, specific plans, SCS, and local coastal programs. All uses that include the creation of planning documents must be accompanied by a commitment to adopt by the expenditure deadline.

Revamping local planning processes to accelerate Infill development that facilitates Housing supply, choice, and affordability.

Streamlining environmental clearance to eliminate the need for project-specific review for Infill development that facilitates Housing supply, choice, and affordability.

Infrastructure planning in upgrading infrastructure, including for sewers, water systems, transit, active transportation, or other public facilities necessary to enable reduction in Per Capita VMT and accelerate Infill development that facilitates Housing supply, choice, and affordability.

Multimodal: Developing bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure plans and other multimodal plans or policies. Producing multimodal corridor studies associated with developing specific planning documents or implementation actions. Funding and implementing parking and transportation demand management programs or ordinances.

Prohibited Uses: REAP 2.0 grants and funding may not be used, per the REAP NOFA, for uses inconsistent with REAP 2.0 goals and objectives. Under unique circumstances, applicants may propose an alternative definition of “Infill” subject to approval by the Department and State Collaborative Partners.

DELIVERABLES

- Draft and Final Documents produced for each TA task.
- If the task is primarily advising, AI-generated and edited transcriptions of meetings with summary statement stating how the topic(s) comply with REAP 2.0 guidelines.
- Jurisdiction MOU to VCOG and/or action item document documenting an “adoptive action.”

STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS SUBMISSION

The SOQ submission document should be one combined PDF not exceeding 20 MBs and identified as “VCOG RFQ 25-01 SUBMITTERS NAME” and include the following in this sequence:

- Cover with Submitters Name, date, and “VCOG RFQ 25-02”
- Cover Letter (not to exceed three pages)
- Statement as to ability to consult number of simultaneous cities
- List of Projects showing competency
- Three References with contact information
- Resumes of Principals
- Fee schedule

Note: All parts of the SOQ must be received via email at cbwplans@gmail.com prior to the deadline of 5:00 PM PDT, January 29, 2025.

Proposals shall be addressed to:

Chris Williamson, REAP Program Manager
Ventura Council of Governments
33 High Street, Suite 200
Moorpark, CA 93012
(e-mail cbwplans@gmail.com)

- a. All submissions are considered a matter of public record.
- b. The fee schedule shall be valid for a minimum of 180 days.
- c. VCOG reserves the right to reject any and all proposals.
- d. The terms and scope of the contract will be arrived at on the basis of professional negotiations between VCOG and the Consultant. If VCOG and the Consultant fail to reach a contractual agreement, VCOG may renegotiate with any other top selected Consultant.
- e. Any questions must be emailed to the VCOG Executive Director no later than three (3) working days after the deadline to submit questions. Answers to the questions will be emailed to everyone

SOQs are NOT to be marked as confidential or proprietary. VCOG will refuse to consider any responses so

marked. Documents submitted in response to this RFQ may become subject to public disclosure per the California Public Records Act, Government Code Section 6250 et seq. VCOG shall not be liable in any way for disclosure of any such records. Additionally, all SOQs shall become the property of VCOG. VCOG reserves the right to make use of any information or ideas submitted.

By submitting, the Respondent represents that it has thoroughly examined VCOG's requirements and are familiar with the services required under this RFQ, and that it is qualified and capable of providing the services to achieve the VCOG's objectives.

Each Respondent must submit its SOQ in strict accordance with all requirements of this RFQ and compliance must be stated in the response. **Deviations, clarifications and/or exceptions must be clearly identified and listed separately** as alternative items for VCOG's consideration as specified in Section II; Part 1; "IX. Statement of Compliance."

VCOG reserves the right to negotiate modifications with any Respondent as necessary to serve the best interests of VCOG. Any SOQ may be rejected if it is conditional, incomplete or deviates from specifications in this RFQ. VCOG reserves the right to waive, at its discretion, any procedural irregularity, immaterial defects or other improprieties which VCOG deems reasonably correctable or otherwise not warranting rejection. Any waiver will not excuse a Respondent from full compliance.

VCOG shall not be liable for any expenses incurred by Respondent in the preparation or submission of their SOQ. Pre-contractual expenses are defined as including, but not limited to, expenses incurred by the Respondent in: a) preparing its response to this RFQ; b) submitting that SOQ to VCOG; c) negotiating with VCOG any matter related to the Respondent's SOQ; and d) any other expenses incurred by the Respondent prior to the date of award and execution, if any, of the Contract.

Where two or more Respondents desire to submit a single response to this solicitation, they must do so on a prime/sub basis rather than as a joint venture. VCOG intends to contract with several single firms that may subcontract with multiple firms (team) but not with multiple firms doing business as a joint venture.

SELECTION CRITERIA

VCOG may reject all quotes proposals at its sole discretion.

The following is VCOG's scoring criteria for the selection of Consultant(s):

- a. Familiarity with the planning and development context in Ventura County and its jurisdictions in VCOG jurisdictions. 40%
- b. Experience with VMT reduction, infill development, and AFFH programs. 20%
- c. Willingness and demonstrated ability to meet deadlines. 10%
- d. Responsiveness to requirements, terms, and conditions of this Request. 10%
- e. Proposed fee schedule. 10%
- f. Depth of staffing to complete projects in different jurisdictions simultaneously. 10%

PUBLIC DOMAIN AND LIMITATIONS

a. All reports and pertinent data or materials are considered in the public domain once completed. All work products are subject to public records requests. SCAG, as the grantor to VCOG, retains contractual oversight and may request additional invoice backup documentation at its discretion to comply with applicable SCAG procurement policies and practice.

b. The Request for Quote does not commit VCOG to pay any costs incurred in preparation of the proposal or to procure or contract for services or supplies. VCOG reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals

received as a result of this request, to negotiate with any qualified source, or to cancel in part or in its entirety this request if it is in the best interests of VCOG to do so. VCOG may require the proposer selected to participate in negotiations, and to submit such price, technical, or other revisions of their proposals as may result from such negotiations.

d. Neither VCOG nor SCAG shall not be obligated to pay for any increase in Project costs which exceeds VCOG or SCAG's obligated funding amount.

e. VCOG and/or SCAG reserve the right, in its sole discretion, to discontinue funding the Program and terminate the contract.

OTHER INFORMATION

Insurance Requirements.

Certificates of general liability and errors and omissions insurance will be required by the successful contractor to confirm that the insurance policies required by the contract have been obtained. These certificates of insurance or other documentation of insurance are required from the contractor following award of the contract but no later than contractor's Notice to Proceed. No work will be authorized until the required insurance documentation is received by VCOG staff.

Conflict of Interest.

VCOG Staff shall not participate directly or indirectly in a procurement when a VCOG Board member or VCOG staff knows that: (1) any member of the VCOG Board member or employee's immediate family (immediate family member is defined as a parent; sibling; child by blood, adoption, or marriage; spouse; grandparent or grandchild) has a personal financial interest pertaining to the procurement; (2) a business or organization in which the VCOG Board member or employee, or any member of the VCOG Board member or employee's immediate family, has a personal financial interest pertaining to the procurement; or (3) any other person, business or organization with whom the VCOG Board member or employee or any member of the VCOG Board member or employee's immediate family is negotiating or has an arrangement concerning prospective employment is involved in the procurement. Upon discovery of an actual or potential conflict of interest, the VCOG Executive Director shall promptly consult with SCAG to determine if the contract award may proceed and/or conditions that may be required.

Debarment.

Contractors/vendors and subcontractors must not be debarred, suspended or otherwise excluded by the United States Government in compliance with the requirements of 7 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 3016.35, 28 CFR 66.35, 29 CFR 97.35, 34 CFR 80.35, 45 CFR 92.35, Executive Order 12549, and Public Contract Code (PCC) Section 6109. As part of the award process, prior to contract award VCOG will verify proposer, its principal and their named subcontractors are not on the Federal debarred, suspended or otherwise excluded list of vendors located at www.sam.gov, or the State of California, located at www.dir.ca.gov/dlse/debar.html. Upon verification that the proposer (its staff or subcontractors) is on either list VCOG shall exclude the proposer from any further consideration in the award process.

Protests.

Proposers may not protest the contents of the specifications of the solicitation. VCOG's Policy on Contract Award Protests, can be viewed online at <https://www.venturacog.org/>." Any participating party may file a protest of a contract award or proposed contract award. The protest or appeal must be made in writing within ten (10) days of award notification and contain at least the following information:

- The name, address and telephone number of the protester;
- The signature of the protester;
- The bid number and date of bid closing; and

- A statement of the legal and/or factual grounds on which the protest or appeal is based, including copies of information relevant to the bid.

Resolution of Protests.

The VCOG Executive Director will investigate the grounds stated within the protest and respond within ten (10) calendar days. The Executive Director's decision shall stand.

Procurement Files.

VCOG will maintain records sufficient to detail the history of procurement, including, but not limited to:

- (i) Rationale for the method of procurement;
- (ii) Selection of contract type;
- (iii) Basis for contractor selection or rejection;
- (iv) Record of contract or price negotiation;
- (v) The basis for the contract price; and
- (vi) Documentation of no conflict of interest for evaluator(s).

VCOG will make all procurement files available for inspection upon request by a federal, state, or pass-through awarding agency.

Professional Services.

Selection of persons or firms to provide professional services shall be based on demonstrated competence and on the professional qualifications necessary for the satisfactory performance of the services required. The price for the services shall be reasonable and competitive but VCOG is not required to award the contract to the lowest proposer.

Quote Proposal Noticing.

Per the VCOG Purchasing Policy, solicitations under \$25,000 do not need to be published in a newspaper and may be made by posting a notice in a public location, including a website, or by mail, fax, or email to persons and firms selected by the VCOG staff based on generally available listings of persons and firms likely to have interest and qualifications.

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