

Request for Information

Maine Forest Economy Growth Initiative

Strategic Planning

Issue Date: September 21, 2017

Closing Date: October 13, 2017

Part 1. Background

1.1 Committee Overview

We are a consortium of forest industry organizations that are working together to develop a long-term Vision & Roadmap for Maine's Forest products sector, including the:

- Maine Forest Products Council
- Professional Logging Contractors of Maine
- Maine Woodland Owners
- State of Maine
- University of Maine, led by the Center for Research on Sustainable Forests
- Maine Development Foundation.

This consortium will help industry and government leaders work together to develop a common long-term vision for the sector by identifying the key opportunities that must be captured, key challenges that must be met, and key obstacles that must be overcome to develop greater economic prosperity in the forest products sector across the State.

The Maine Forest Products Council (MFPC) has been awarded a federal grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration for the project.

1.2 Background

A rapid decline in the demand for paper products has led to the recent closure of five pulp and paper mills and the periodic idling of biomass electric facilities. Between 2014 and 2016, the total economic impact of the forest products industry fell from \$9.8 billion to \$8.5 billion, and more than 5,000 jobs were lost. Maine has lost 50 percent of its softwood pulp market in the last two years and has experienced a significant decrease in the demand for biomass.

This project will identify Maine's forest product market capabilities and competitiveness, and quantify Maine's future wood supply to develop a Vision & Roadmap for Maine's future forest products economy. The results will attract capital investments and develop greater economic prosperity and diversity in the forest products sector across the State for both existing and new businesses.

1.3 Purpose of the RFI

The purpose of this RFI is to allow the Committee to assess supplier responses and use the resultant assessments in future decision making in regard to supply of the Opportunity. While it is the intent of the Committee to compare supplier responses for the purposes of understanding service offerings, the Committee makes no obligations or undertakings in any way to:

- a) go to tender; or
- b) accept any RFI information received from suppliers; or
- c) include suppliers responding to this RFI in any future tender invitation; or
- d) any other commitment to suppliers whatsoever, including any intention to form a contract with any supplier for provision of the Opportunity.

1.4 Opportunity

The Executive Committee will be selecting a consultant to integrate the findings of the Roadmap effort (See Appendix A, Org Chart) into a plan to make Maine's forest products sector more competitive globally and grow jobs in the forest economy and rural Maine. The plan will include specific strategies to grow markets for softwood and hardwood pulp and residuals and to add value to wood here in Maine. It will identify important recommendations to policy makers, industry members and government officials to build a strong long-term forest industry and to improve the image of the forest products industry in Maine and globally.

The opportunity to develop a strategic and implementation plan for this project will include:

- Writing the drafts of the strategic and implementation plan documents and working with the Committee to complete the final documents, including packaging of products and materials.
- Working with the Executive and Sub Committees (See Appendix A, Org Chart) to ensure that sufficient data is collected in order to develop a robust plan. Each subcommittee has a specific scope of work. It will be the role of this consultant to integrate those findings.
- Identifying case studies in North America and globally within the past 20 years where forest industry expansion and growth has been achieved.
- Identifying both short-term and long term opportunities.
- Identifying Maine specific barriers to growth and strategies to mitigate, both internal and external.
- Developing specific goals and a timeline to achieve desired outcomes with clear accountability for action items.
- Identifying opportunities to support existing businesses in addition to attracting new businesses to the State.

The contractor or team should have a demonstrated track record of carrying out the following:

- Strategic planning with industry and government partnerships to develop sustainable economic growth in a given sector.
- Successful facilitation of a strategic planning processes.
- Working with policy makers at the Town, State, and Federal levels.

Part 2. Instructions

2.1 Key Dates

Any questions regarding the RFI should be submitted to the committee contact email address **no later than October 6, 2017**.

All responses to this RFI are due no later than **October 13, 2017 by 5 pm**. Any responses received after this date and time will not be considered.

2.2 Committee Contact

The following individual is the contact for the RFI:

Sarah Curran, Program Director for the Maine Forest Economy Growth Initiative
Phone: (207) 622-6345
Email: scurran@mdf.org

2.3 Questions

Suppliers are to direct any questions regarding the RFI content or process to the RFI contact. All questions should be submitted to the nominated email address during the RFI question period indicated above. The Committee may choose to convey responses to submitted questions to all suppliers so that each is equally informed.

2.4 Response Methods

Suppliers must submit their response in the following method:

- a) By email to: scurran@mdf.org. The subject heading of the email shall be **Maine Forest Economy Growth Initiative Strategic Planning RFI**. Only electronic copies are to be submitted in PDF format and suppliers may submit multiple emails (suitably annotated – ex. Email 1 of 3) if attached files are deemed too large to suit a single email transmission.
- b) Size of emailed tender not to exceed 15MB.
- c) MFEGI will confirm receipt of bids as they arrive with a confirmation email to sender.

2.5 Suppliers to Inform Themselves

The Committee has taken all reasonable care to ensure that the RFI is accurate; however the Committee gives no representation or warranty as to the accuracy or sufficiency of the contained information.

2.6 Costs of Preparing the Response

All costs relating to the preparation and submission of a response are the sole responsibility of the supplier. The Committee shall not pay the supplier, wholly or in part, for its response.

2.7 Confidentiality

Except as required for the preparation of a response, suppliers must not, without the Committee's prior written consent, disclose to any third party any of the contents of the RFI documents. Suppliers must ensure that their employees, consultants and agents also are bound and comply with this condition of confidentiality.

2.8 Acceptance of these Conditions

Suppliers, by submitting a response to this RFI, are deemed to have acknowledged and agreed to the conditions set out in this RFI.

Part 3. Information to be Provided

All responses must be signed by an official agent or representative of the company.

The following is the minimum information suppliers are required to provide to the Committee. If this information, or any additional information, is available on your website please provide the address to enable us to undertake further analysis.

3.1 Supplier Details

- a) Supplier name (Trading and Registered), registered address.
- b) Details of supplier operating locations.
- c) Supplier ownership information.
- d) Relationships with any parent company (if applicable).
- e) Details of joint venture arrangements (if applicable).

3. 2 Supplier Capabilities and Experience

- a) A description of the core supplier business, listing relevant case studies or examples (a maximum of three) that support this description. Where possible, include case studies that may relate to activities consistent with the Opportunity. Within necessary boundaries of confidentiality, please be as specific as possible.
- b) Additional services, products and works provided outside of your core business.
- c) Describe why you would be uniquely qualified to meet or exceed the requirements of this study.
- d) If you have conducted similar projects, please indicate other factors that the committee should consider exploring in order to get the best result. Provide examples of similar work that you have done and what was included.

3. 3 Certifications and Awards

- a) Details of all certifications held (ex. ISO 9001) including date of last certification and details of the certifying body (copies of certifications may be appended to your response).
- b) Details of any recent external corporate awards, including the awarding body, if relevant to the Opportunity.

3. 4 Other Information

- a) Please include any information that will enable the Committee to understand how the supplier will provide services to address the Opportunity. This should include examples of similar previous work done by the supplier.
- b) What information would be required by the supplier from the Committee to be able to submit pricing?
- c) Please provide 3 relevant references including contact information.
- d) Any further information/opportunities you believe the Committee may require in support of its RFI review activities.

No contracts shall be made with parties listed on the General Services Administration's List of Parties Excluded from Federal Procurement or Nonprocurement Programs. All necessary steps will be taken to solicit participation of locally-owned, minority-owned, female-owned and small businesses.

The committee may choose to schedule conference call meetings with each supplier to review the submitted information and provide the opportunity for the supplier to provide additional background relevant to this project.

Appendix A

Roadmap and Vision for Maine's Forest Sector

