

Montgomery County Green Bank

Request for Proposals (RFP) for a Strategic Planning Consultant

Issued: July 19, 2024

Chartered publicly in 2016 by the Montgomery County Council, the Montgomery County Green Bank (Green Bank) is an independent 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation with a 15-member, self-selecting Board of Directors (the Board). The Green Bank's mission is to help Montgomery County achieve its climate goals by leveraging capital and innovative partnerships to make clean energy and climate-resilient solutions more accessible and affordable for all residents and businesses. Our vision is to see a prospering, sustainable, healthy Montgomery County where everyone participates in and benefits from clean energy and climate-resilient solutions

Section 1 – Summary and Instructions

1.1 Purpose

The Green Bank seeks a qualified Contractor to provide support to the Board and the Chief Executive Officer (“CEO”) in preparing a new Strategic Plan (the “Plan”). This will be the Green Bank's third Plan which will become effective in July 2025, which is the start of the Green Bank's fiscal year 2026. The Plan is anticipated to cover a medium-term period of at least three years but may be longer. It is anticipated to focus on how the Green Bank should leverage substantial growth of investments into deeper climate liquidity and impacts for the community alongside alignment with the Montgomery County Climate Action Plan.

The Green Bank's investment activities have grown by multiples over the last several fiscal years. See www.mcgreenbank.org for a summary of completed deals and the Green Bank's annual reports. The selected Contractor is expected to evaluate the organizational and strategic architecture that led to such growth in order to facilitate conversations, along with business planning and modeling around where the Green Bank should go from here. In addition, the Green Bank's Board is comprised of members with diverse and extensive experience that the Contractor should aim to leverage in preparing the Plan. Finally, Montgomery County has a rich body of work in the climate space, including a Climate Action Plan, that should be leveraged during this process. As an example of a key area of scope, the Contractor may need to provide a market analysis of the Climate Action Plan and corresponding demand for the Green Bank.

In accordance with the Green Bank's Bylaws, the CEO prepares an Annual Workplan and Operating Budget that gets reviewed by and approved by the Board every year. The Strategic Plan is intended to focus on a longer timeframe and at a higher level. Future Annual Workplans and Operating Budgets will take the Strategic Plan into consideration with respect to execution of progress against that Plan within a single fiscal year.

1.2 Designated RFP Contact

All correspondence for this RFP should be directed to:

Stephen Morel
Chief Executive Officer
Montgomery County Green Bank
155 Gibbs Street, Suite 407
Rockville, MD 20850
Email: smorel@mcgreenbank.org

1.3 Schedule

The following is the anticipated schedule for award:

- RFP issued: July 19, 2024.
- Questions due: July 26, 2024.
- Responses to questions will be posted as received and answered.
- Proposals due: August 9, 2024.

The Green Bank reserves the right to modify this schedule at its discretion. Any changes or additional information regarding the RFP schedule and pre-bid activities, including responses to questions, will be posted on the MCGB website.

1.4 Period of Performance

The Green Bank anticipates engaging with a Contractor in August 2024 through the completion of the Strategic Plan in June 2025.

1.5 Anticipated Contract Budget

The contract is anticipated to be fulfilled on a time-and-materials basis. Contractors will be expected to provide both remote and onsite services, if deemed necessary.

1.6 Proposal Submission

Proposals must be submitted no later than 11:59pm Eastern Daylight Time on August 9, 2024. Proposals may be submitted by mail at 155 Gibbs Street, Suite 407, Rockville, MD 20850 or by email at smorel@mcgreenbank.org. Any revisions to submission requirements or deadlines will be posted on the Green Bank website.

1.7 Submitting Questions

It is the responsibility of all bidders and other interested parties to examine the entire RFP and to request any clarifications in writing. Questions regarding this RFP must be submitted by email to the Designated RFP Contact listed in section 1.2 prior to the due date for questions noted above in section 1.3. Responses to questions will be posted on the Green Bank website as will all clarifications and amendments released in regard to the RFP. It is the responsibility of all interested parties to check this website periodically to obtain clarifications and amendments.

1.8 Proposal Confidentiality

Proposals will be treated as confidential except as required by law and provided that any information submitted will be shared with the Green Bank's Board of Directors and outside counsel.

1.9 Contract Award

The Green Bank will notify all bidders of the contract award decision by email. The Green Bank reserves the right to negotiate the final terms and conditions of the contract award with a winning bidder whose proposal is selected, and to reject any winning bidder with whom the Green Bank, in MCGB's sole judgment, cannot agree to terms and conditions.

1.10 RFP Process – Reservation of Rights

The Green Bank reserves the right to cancel or extend the RFP process at any time, and to issue clarifications and amendments to the RFP. The Green Bank also reserves the right to reject any submissions in response to this RFP. The Green Bank, in its sole discretion, reserves the right to recognize and waive minor informalities and irregularities found in proposals received in response to this RFP. Issuance of this RFP does not commit the Green Bank to make an award. The Green Bank will not pay any costs or expenses incurred by a bidder in connection with the preparation of any proposal or response to this RFP.

1.11 Contract Agreement

A copy of the Green Bank's Standard Agreement is attached. This is the template that will serve as the basis for the services agreement between the winning bidder and the Green Bank. The Green Bank and the awardee may negotiate further terms and conditions as might be appropriate, subject in all events to approval by the Green Bank in its sole discretion. Any contract will include a nondisclosure agreement in form and substance satisfactory to the Green Bank. Certain information regarding Green Bank customers that have participated or that may participate in a Green Bank program shall be deemed confidential and subject to such agreement.

Section 2 – Scope of Work

The Contractor is expected to provide the following elements of its work with the Board and the CEO. The Contractor is invited to propose other elements of Scope that in its experience of providing Strategic Plan consulting it finds valuable to the process. Final Scope of Work will be agreed upon at contract signing.

1. Strategic Plan Development:

- Work closely with the Board and CEO through a series of meetings over a 10-month period. The Contractor will communicate most closely with the CEO and a small ad hoc Board committee. Less frequent communication will take place with the full Board for purposes of presentations and strategic direction.
- Plan and execute several structured roundtables and/or interviews with the Board, Staff, and other Stakeholders as appropriate. For example, the CEO and Board anticipate a need for a "retreat" to facilitate development of the Plan.

- Develop a comprehensive multi-year Strategic Plan informed by Stakeholder input, market analysis, and business modeling. Contractor should expect to focus predominantly on methods to reach the market (e.g., products, programs, and financial strategies) in consideration of current and future funding streams, but may also focus on operational strategic planning. The Contractor should only focus on new funding strategies to the extent it determines current funding levels are insufficient to achieve the Plan and to the extent it is aware of alternative sources that correspond to programming recommendations.
- Facilitate discussions and workshops to ensure stakeholder engagement and buy-in.

2. Market Analysis:

- Conduct a detailed market analysis of the clean energy, energy efficiency, and climate resilience sectors in Montgomery County. Leverage the initial market estimates in these sectors alongside the work of the County. The CEO and Board are seeking a clear picture of what it will take to fulfill the needs under the Climate Action Plan by the deadlines that the plan establishes. Furthermore, the CEO and Board are seeking a clear picture of what level of demand exists for the existing and recommended product/program lines.
- Identify key trends, opportunities, and challenges within these sectors in Montgomery County.

3. Business Modeling:

- Develop a medium to long term business model based on market analysis. Align modeling with strategic goals and expectations stemming from the strategic planning process.
- Make recommendations for products and programs that align with the Green Bank's mission and market opportunities.

Deliverables. It is anticipated that the Contractor will provide an interim report and a final report that integrate the above elements. Contractors are welcome to propose at which stage an interim report may be delivered based on experience with similar engagements. The Green Bank anticipates that an interim report will be provided upon the collection of a sufficient level of Stakeholder feedback and internal/external meetings about formulating the Plan.

Section 3 – Proposal Requirements and Submission

Proposals must be submitted by mail or email to the Designated RFP Contact listed above. Proposals should contain the following:

1. A narrative of the qualifications, staffing and management proposed.
2. The qualifications/resumes/CVs of relevant individuals who will be engaged in the contract.
3. Time and materials cost proposal – narrative and costs.
4. Descriptions of at least two similar engagements and the outcomes of those engagements. The Green Bank may ask for references upon review of the engagements.

If submitting over email, bidders may provide the requirements in a single document or multiple attachments. PDF and Word documents are acceptable.

Section 4 – Evaluation

The Green Bank will evaluate proposals based on the following criteria:

1. **Experience:** Demonstrated experience in working with Boards on multi-year strategic plans.
2. **Capabilities:** Proven capabilities in business modeling and forecasting.
3. **Market Analysis:** Strength in providing accurate and actionable market analysis.
4. **Price:** A competitive structure for the level of effort being proposed.