

Proposal Information

Proposals are due no later than Friday, August 7, 2026 at 4:00 P.M., Proposers should deliver one complete electronic copy of the proposal in a “pdf” format via email, or hard copy delivered to:

sdudas@esvaplan.org

Sherry Dudas, Regional Planner
Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission
23372 Front Street
Accomac, Virginia 23301

This Request for Proposals (RFP) and any addenda are also available on the A-NPDC website at:

<https://www.esvaplan.org>. Clarification of the terms and conditions of this proposal should be directed to Sherry Dudas at 757-787-2936, ext. 129 or sdudas@esvaplan.org. All inquiries that affect the nature of the proposed contract or proposal contents will be conveyed to all parties receiving this Request for Proposals. A-NPDC will not be responsible for any information given by way of verbal communication.

Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (small or minority and/or women owned firms) are encouraged to submit proposals. The Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission is an Equal Opportunity Employer and is committed to ensuring no person is excluded from participation in or denied the benefits of its services on the basis of race, color or national origin, as protected by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (*78 Stat. 252, 42 U.S.C. §§ 2000d-2000d-4*). The successful proposer and any sub consultants selected to perform work pursuant to this RFP will be required to submit a Title VI Evaluation Report (EEO-D2) within 10 workdays after notification of their selection.

BACKGROUND: The Eastern Shore of Virginia, comprised of the Counties of Accomack and Northampton, is a region with a strong and unique regional identity directly tied to its economy, which is strongly tied to its land, water and aerospace industries. The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is intended to complement and strengthen existing regional plans and provide a roadmap for future economic development and growth.

The Accomack-Northampton District Commission’s (A-NPDC) Economic Development Committee (EDC) completed a process in 2017 to merge the existing Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy and Stronger Economies Together Economic Development Plan into one comprehensive document. In 2021, the A-NPDC completed a revision of its CEDS, and it has served the region from 2022-2026. The purpose of this RFP is to retain a consultant to assist in the development and creation of an update to this CEDS.

The economic sectors to be specifically addressed in the CEDS update are:

- Aerospace
- Agriculture/Aquaculture
- Forestry/Timber
- Visitor Services
- Health Care

Consultant Responsibilities:

- a) Review all economic development related information found in the codes, ordinances and policies, including policies on county and state financial incentives, of Accomack County and Northampton County, as well as all relevant sections of the Code of Virginia.
- b) Review the Counties’ Comprehensive Plans, as well as all pertinent information relating to the creation and adoption of the economic development portions of the Plans.

- c) Consult with representatives of each County's Board of Supervisors, the Economic Development Authority(ies)/ Boards as well as the County Administrator and the Director of Community Development and other members of County staff to ensure that all relevant concerns about each County's economic development landscape are considered and addressed in the CEDS.
- d) Consult with representatives of each incorporated locality as well as members of staff of each locality to ensure that all relevant concerns about each locality's economic development landscape are considered and addressed in the CEDS.
- e) Prepare a document that outlines a vision for the Eastern Shore of Virginia's economic future as well as the goals, objectives, and policies for economic development in the region for the next five or more years. This information shall be derived from the consultant's interactions with citizens, employees, consultants and representatives of the Counties and localities during anticipated public workshops and meetings. The vision statement shall be related to the vision established by the reviews of the Counties' Comprehensive Plans and shall focus not just on economic development issues but shall also incorporate the regional vision for all of the Eastern Shore of Virginia's resources and assets. The goals, objectives, and policies developed shall be in a format that can be incorporated into the CEDS.
- f) Prepare a comprehensive economic base analysis for the Eastern Shore of Virginia. This document shall expand upon the research of the Counties' Comprehensive Plans' existing conditions analysis and evaluate all aspects of the Counties' economy as it currently exists. Characteristics of the ESVA's workforce, job market, tax base, tax rates and business climate, among other relevant factors, shall be evaluated. The analysis shall look at both the present and the future.
- f) Prepare a strengths and weaknesses assessment to determine which resources the region should focus on improving. This document expands on the economic base analysis, covering topics such as demographic trends, labor force trends, communications infrastructure, public education, health and safety, the region's current economic development efforts and other similar topics, and highlight which are strengths, which are neutrals, and which are weaknesses.
- g) Prepare an action item list of economic development priorities for the region to implement the recommendations of the CEDS. These priorities must include, among other relevant items, recommendations on incentive packages for new and existing industries' workforce development and recommendations on infrastructure improvements.
- h) The target industries for Eastern Shore of Virginia, agriculture/agriculture, forestry/timber, health care, visitor services and aerospace, shall be directly linked to the findings of the strengths and weaknesses assessment, to focus economic development efforts. This list should act as the primary roadmap for the region's future efforts in attracting new businesses, helping current businesses expand, as well as maintaining the businesses currently operating in the region.
- i) Prepare a list of priority business and industrial sites in Eastern Shore of Virginia. This list must be the result of a thorough evaluation of existing industrial sites and sites proposed for business and industrial uses in the Counties' Comprehensive Plans, as well as an evaluation of the designated industrial areas of the region that are appropriate for future business and industrial development, including the strengths and weaknesses of each site.
- j) Develop a plan for public input and involvement in the strategic economic development planning process, including workshops, public listening sessions and meetings. The plan shall include methods to involve citizens of all ages, races, incomes, and backgrounds including those not normally engaged in government processes.
- k) Attend and facilitate all workshops, public involvement sessions, and meetings related to the strategic economic development planning process. Deliverables: 1.) Prepare a complete, comprehensive, stand-alone document that can serve as Eastern Shore of Virginia's plan for economic development; and 2.) Final document(s) shall be prepared in a manner and form mutually agreed to by the A-NPDC and the consultant.

PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS:

A. GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS: This section is used to inform the potential offerors of how many copies of the proposal must be submitted, how the proposal is to be prepared, the possibility of oral presentations by the offerors, etc.

1. RFP Response: In order to be considered for selection, offerors must submit a complete response to this RFP. One (1) original copy of each proposal must be submitted to the A-NPDC. It shall be the sole responsibility of the offeror under all circumstances to assure that its proposal is received by the date, time and location specified herein.

2. Proposal Content and Format: Qualified Firms shall provide appropriate information in accordance with the content and format requirements of this Request for Proposal. The Firm's proposal shall not exceed 20 pages and shall be organized in the following order:

- a. Transmittal letter and statement on understanding of Scope of Services;
- b. Familiarity with Virginia's Eastern Shore region;
- c. Firm's professional qualifications, staff and their qualifications;
- d. Listing of proposed sub consultants;
- e. Listing of similar projects (no project older than five years) with proposed Firm staff's experience;
- f. Understanding of and relevant experience with federal funding programs; and
- g. Reference list.

3. Oral Presentation: Offerors who submit a proposal in response to this RFP may be required to give an oral presentation of their proposal to the A-NPDC's selection committee formed for the evaluation of Firms' proposals. This provides an opportunity for the offeror to clarify or elaborate on the proposal. This is a fact-finding and explanation session only and does not include negotiation. The A-NPDC will schedule the time and location of these presentations. Oral presentations are an option of the purchasing agency and may or may not be conducted.

Project Timeline (14-Month Completion)

The project schedule distributes the technical analysis, stakeholder engagement, and federal approval phases across a 14-month period.

M1-M3: Project Launch & Data Collection

└─ M4--M6: SWOT & Sector-Specific Analysis

└─ M7--M9: Drafting Strategy & Action Plan

└─ M9--10: 30-Day Public Comment Period

└─ M11--12 Public Comment & Revisions

└─ M12--14: Final Approvals & EDA Submission

Phase 1: Launch & Diagnostics (Months 1–3)

- Kickoff meeting with the A-NPDC's EDC.
- Data collection on Eastern Shore of Virginia demographics, labor shifts, and economic baselines.
- Comprehensive review of existing county comprehensive plans and infrastructure assessments.

Phase 2: SWOT & Sector Deep-Dives (Months 4–6)

- Conduct SWOT analysis tailored to rural, coastal, and isolated peninsula dynamics.
- Execute targeted sector analysis for Aerospace, Aquaculture/Agriculture, Visitor Services, Health Care, and Forestry/Timber.
- Assess the region's infrastructure vulnerabilities (i.e., broadband gaps, sea-level rise and groundwater and wastewater limits).

Phase 3: Community & Stakeholder Engagement (Months 7-9)

- Facilitate focus groups with industry leaders, town administrators, and industry representatives.
- Launch public surveys and conduct community workshops across Accomack and Northampton counties.
- Present interim diagnostic findings to the CEDS Strategy Committee.

Phase 4: Strategy Formulation & Action Plan (Months 9-10)

- Define the 5-year Eastern Shore of Virginia’s vision, goals, and measurable objectives.
- Draft the Economic Resilience plan to address climate impacts and economic shocks.
- Develop the implementation matrix assigning project owners, timelines, and potential funding sources.

Phase 5: Public Comment & Revisions (Month 11-12)

- Release the draft CEDS for the mandatory **30-day public comment period**.
- Aggregate public feedback and log all comments for EDA compliance.
- Revise and finalize the document based on EDC and public input.

Phase 6: Approvals & Federal Submission (Months 13-14)

- Present final CEDS to county Boards of Supervisors for formal adoption.
- Secure final sign-off from the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission (A-NPDC).
- Submit the complete package to the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA).

Selection Committee and Proposal Evaluation Criteria A selection committee will be formed to review the proposals. The selection committee evaluation and selection process will be used to determine the most qualified firm. The following criteria will be considered in evaluating the proposals:

Evaluation Metrics Matrix

Proposals will be scored out of 100 maximum points based on the technical and financial criteria below.

Criteria	Max Points	Evaluation Focus
Technical Approach & Methodology	30	Logic of work plan; strategy for managing Eastern Shore of Virginia data; alignment with EDA requirements.
Stakeholder Engagement Plan	25	Creativity and inclusivity of outreach; methods to engage remote populations and its workforce, including high-tech sectors.
Firm Experience & Personnel	20	Qualifications of the project manager; past success authoring approved CEDS; experience with rural or coastal communities. Relevant experience with federal and Commonwealth of Virginia funding programs including discretionary grant projects, and specifically those administered by the US Department of Commerce, Economic Development Authority, the US Small Business Administration, and the Virginia Economic Development Partnership.
Cost Proposal & Value	10	Clarity of cost breakdown by phase; reasonableness of hourly rates; overall cost-effectiveness.
Project Schedule & Feasibility	5	Practicality of the 13-month workflow; resource allocation; risk mitigation strategies for delays.
Familiarity	10	Familiarity with the Eastern Shore of Virginia.

§ 303.7 Requirements for Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies.

(a) *General.* CEDS are designed to bring together the public and private sectors in the creation of an economic roadmap to diversify and strengthen Eastern Shore of Virginia economies. The CEDS should analyze the Eastern Shore of Virginia economy and serve as a guide for establishing Eastern Shore of Virginia goals and objectives, developing and implementing an Eastern Shore of Virginia plan of action, and identifying investment priorities and funding sources. Public and private sector partnerships are critical to the implementation of the integral elements of a CEDS set forth in

paragraph (b) of this section. As a performance-based plan, the CEDS will serve a critical role in an Eastern Shore of Virginia's efforts to defend against economic dislocations due to global trade, competition and other events resulting in the loss of jobs and private investment.

(b) *Strategy requirements.* (1) A CEDS must be the result of a continuing economic development planning process, developed with broad-based and diverse public and private sector participation. The CEDS must promote Eastern Shore of Virginia resiliency and be unique and responsive to the relevant to the region and must include:

- (i) A summary of economic development conditions of the Eastern Shore of Virginia;
- (ii) An in-depth analysis of economic and community development strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (commonly known as a “*SWOT*” analysis);
- (iii) Strategies and an implementation plan to build upon the Eastern Shore of Virginia's strengths and opportunities and resolve the weaknesses and threats facing the Eastern Shore of Virginia, which should not be inconsistent with applicable State and local economic development or workforce development strategies; and
- (iv) Performance measures used to evaluate the A-NPDC's successful development and implementation of the CEDS.

CERTIFICATION REGARDING DEBARMENT

(To be completed by the proposer upon notification of selection)

- 1) The below-signed Proposer certifies to the best of its knowledge and belief, that it and its principals:
 - a) Are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from covered transactions by any Federal department or agency;
 - b) Have not within a three-year period preceding this proposal been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against them for commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (Federal, State, or local) transaction or contract under a public transaction; and have not been convicted of any violations of Federal or State antitrust statutes or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification, or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property;
 - c) Are not presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civically charged by a governmental entity (Federal, State, or local) with commission of any of the offenses enumerated in paragraph 1) b) of this certification; and
 - d) Have not within a three-year period preceding this application/proposal had one or more public transactions (Federal, State, or local) terminated for cause or default.
- 2) Where the Proposer is unable to certify to any of the statements in this certification, such prospective participant shall attach an explanation to this proposal.

The undersigned makes the foregoing statements to be filed with the proposal submitted on behalf of the Proposer.

Signature

Date

Title

Name of Proposing Firm

CERTIFICATION REGARDING DEBARMENT

(To be completed by a sub consultant, if any)

- 1) The prospective sub consultant certifies, by submission of this proposal, that neither it nor its principals is presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any Federal department or agency.
- 2) Where the prospective sub consultant is unable to certify to any of the statements in this certification, such prospective participant shall attach an explanation to this proposal.

The undersigned makes the foregoing statements to be filed with the proposal submitted on behalf of the Proposer.

Signature

Date

Title

Name of Sub consultant Firm