

# **Request for Proposals**

## **Strategic Planning Consultant for the East Coast Greenway Alliance**

### **Summary**

The East Coast Greenway Alliance (ECGA) is seeking an experienced Strategic Planner to guide the organization through the development of a Strategic Plan for 2021-2025.

### **Background**

The ECGA was established in 1991 to realize the vision of a greenway from Calais, ME to Key West, FL, connecting and serving major population centers along the East Coast of the United States. One-third of the 3,000-mile greenway is complete. The Alliance is a million-dollar organization with 13 full-time staff. The headquarters is in Durham, NC.; five regional staff are based along the trail. The Alliance is governed by a board of trustees and has an extensive network of volunteers, partners, funders, and members who contribute to the success of the organization. The Alliance does not own or operate any segment of the greenway itself.

### **Mission**

The mission statement of the ECGA is “to partner with local, state, and national organizations to promote the establishment, stewardship, and public enjoyment of a traffic-free, multi-user greenway linking cities and towns from Maine to Florida.”

### **Strategic Planning**

The Alliance is coming to the end of its current Strategic Plan: Rise. Focus. Engage. This plan was developed in 2015 for a five-year horizon (2016-2020). The four areas of strategic focus, and their related metrics, have closely guided the staff and board in the development of annual workplans and strategic directions.

In 2020, the board is committed to developing a new strategic plan with an emphasis on several key areas:

- a) accelerating the pace of completion of the greenway
- b) solidifying the transition from a volunteer- to staff-led organization
- c) maximizing the contribution of a large network of volunteers and supporters
- d) playing the role of “cheerleader” for the Greenway as effectively as possible, both to increase local, state and national awareness of the greenway and to support public agencies in completing the greenway.

The plan should chart a course to 2025, with the expectation that most strategies, goals and objectives will need to be reviewed and revised after three years given the rapid pace of change, political shifts, and other external factors.

The board has established a strategic planning committee to manage this project.

## **Schedule**

The strategic plan should be adopted by the board of trustees at their December 2020 meeting. We acknowledge the outcome of the 2020 Federal elections may affect some of the final content of the plan.

The board of trustees meets in person in March and December and by phone in other months. The Alliance has major public events planned in April (SE Trails and Greenways Summit, Jacksonville, FL) and May (New York to Philadelphia Bike Ride).

## **Budget**

The Alliance has budgeted to spend up to \$20,000 for this project. We are seeking proposals that identify the most effective use of the consultant's time in combination with the resources of the Alliance staff and board. Trustees and staff have extensive personal and professional experience in strategic planning and understand the importance of external facilitation at key moments in the process; staff are available to assist with information-gathering, volunteer outreach, and other tasks. Trustees and staff are also available to assist with writing and production tasks as appropriate.

## **Proposals**

Proposals should be succinct and respond to the following review criteria and scoring:

***Experience (20%):*** we seek an experienced strategic planner who is able to demonstrate familiarity working with non-profit organizations of a comparable size and scope to the Alliance.

***Approach (20%):*** we are open to traditional or innovative approaches to strategic planning; the proposal should describe your recommended approach and strategic planning philosophy with clarity.

***Understanding roles and responsibilities (30%):*** the proposal should clearly outline the recommended roles and responsibilities for the consultant, trustees, staff, and stakeholders while recognizing that the final process will be agreed after a kick-off meeting between the consultant and strategic planning committee.

***Budget (30%):*** the proposal should explain all costs associated with implementation of the strategic planning process, up to a maximum of \$20,000.

## **Process**

Proposals should be sent by email to [andyclarkeva@gmail.com](mailto:andyclarkeva@gmail.com) before midnight of February 29, 2020.

The Strategic Planning Committee will review the proposals and may request a phone interview for up to one hour during the two weeks following the proposal deadline.

The Strategic Planning Committee will submit their recommended candidate to the board of trustees for approval no later than March 14.

### **Additional Information**

Visit [www.greenway.org](http://www.greenway.org) for additional information about the organization and its programs.