

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COLLABORATIVE – VENTURA COUNTY (EDC)
REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS
CORPORATE COUNSEL, LEGAL SERVICES

I. PURPOSE AND EDC BACKGROUND

- A. Purpose:** EDC is inviting legal services firms to submit summaries of qualifications and statements of interest for the provision of corporate legal services, in support of EDC’s Officers, Board of Directors and staff. This is a competitive procurement, intended to secure engagement for up to a five-year term, with options for extension.

General Submittal Information: Interested firms should submit summaries of qualifications and proposed billing rates for receipt by EDC no later than **10:00 a.m. on Friday, October 18, 2024**. Late responses will not be considered.

See detailed submittal instructions below in Section IV.

B. Background Information, EDC

Established in 1996, EDC-VC is a California not for profit, 501c3 entity, organized as a public/private partnership, dedicated to growing the region’s economy.

With a current annual budget of some \$12 million, EDC currently employs 17 FTEs and maintains a base of more than 50 contract consultants and business advisors. We are service-driven and outcome-oriented, funded primarily by performance-based grants and contracts from federal, state, and local public agencies, providing business advising, alternative lending, and professional training and economic development services.

The EDC's mission is to create empowered business owners, connected community partners and informed civic leaders in the greater Ventura and Santa Barbara County region.

Our vision is for a strong and healthy Ventura and Santa Barbara regional economy with a high quality of life and broadly shared opportunities.

EDC is organized around three service issues:

- ✓ Retaining and growing our existing business base
- ✓ Business attraction, based on a strengths and assets approach, and executed primarily through partnership with local public entities
- ✓ Entrepreneurship and innovation, networking the region’s resources

EDC is *not* a business lobby, though we coordinate with Chambers of Commerce and business associations to educate and inform elected officials and other public representatives on the issues important to business and the economy.

For more on EDC, go to <https://edcollaborative.com/>, for more on staffing, advisors and the board, go to the “About” tab; for a profile of recent service activities, see our [2023 Impact Report](#).

II. NATURE OF SERVICES REQUIRED/SCOPE OF WORK:

A. General engagement, collaboration, commitments:

1. Commitment to providing legal services via a professional partnership, intended to contribute to a constructive and interactive relationship with board and staff, relative both to EDC’s governance and provision of regional economic development services.

2. Regular availability, professional experience and proclivity for collaborative consultation with staff and board leadership for organizational planning, problem solving, and strategic direction.
3. Provision of services through an identified, experienced lead counsel for the primary relationship, with access to a bench of technical expertise as may be needed for various elements of EDC governance and delivery of economic development services.
4. Physical presence, availability of firm's lead for attendance at EDC Executive Committee and full Board of Directors meetings (meetings at 4001 Mission Oaks Blvd, Camarillo; Executive Committee meets 1st Wednesday, full Board 3rd Thursday, both each month except July, full board does not meet in December, all meetings 3:30-5:00; with occasional changes in location).

B. Knowledge and experience:

1. Working with and supporting a California 501c3 nonprofit organization and its governing board and officers (articles of incorporation, bylaws, meeting protocols, corporate compliance, other governance).
2. Leadership experience, interest and capacity for working in and with a public/private governance environment (EDC board includes city council members from each of Ventura County's ten cities, two county supervisors, representation from the Port and CSUCI, and some 20 private sector leaders).
3. Technical knowledge relating to the receipt and administration of public agency grant funding and contracts, for example, federal Uniform Administrative Requirements, federal Department of Defense partnership and cooperative research agreements (we administer some 15 to 20 grants and contracts from federal, state, county, and local governments, currently totaling over \$10 million annually).
4. Support for EDC serving in the role of fiscal agent for regional partners, as designated and funded by various public agencies.
5. Support for our grant-making activities, EDC's distribution of funds by contracts and subrecipient agreements through competitive procurement, as guided by and compliant with state and federal regulations; ongoing technical support for EDC staff in our role for funding various nonprofit organizations, education institutions, public entities, labor organizations.
6. Support for EDC's role as an alternative lender to businesses, using public and private bank and other capital sources; development and review of the various documents, notes and other instruments used to administer and secure loan transactions.
7. General human resource management (though note, EDC maintains a separate relationship with Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud & Romo, as specific issues arise, for professional legal HR/personnel guidance and assistance).

III. SELECTION PROCESS, EVALUATION CRITERIA

A. Selection Process

1. EDC President/CEO will screen and review submittals for satisfying basic qualifications and provide support for the EDC Executive Committee in its role as the lead for interviewing and recommending to the full board selection for counsel.
2. The EDC Executive Committee will review submittals and schedule interviews with finalists as determined per their discretion.

3. The Executive Committee will select a firm for engagement, making a recommendation to the full Board of Directors for its endorsement and final approval.
 4. With Board approval, the Executive Committee will negotiate an engagement for services, intended for award by the end of November 2024.
- C. **Evaluation Criteria** will include the following (see submittal formatting and additional detail in Section IV below)
1. Identification of, experience and commitment by proposed **lead counsel** for engaging with the EDC Board and staff.
 2. Responsiveness to the scope of work, with clear responses to each of the stated elements.
 3. Experience of the firm, specifically depth of expertise relative to each element of the scope of work (i.e., in addition to lead counsel, demonstration of firm expertise and capacity for each element of the scope of work).
 4. Fee structure and hourly rates (while a significant factor, cost is not the dominant consideration, though may be when other evaluation criteria are met with relative equivalence).
 5. Commitment to some stated share of services in a pro bono arrangement (e.g., defining some percent of total hourly billing or some defined set of consultation provided pro bono, for regular meeting attendance or other), or demonstration of reduced rates.
 6. Commitment to regular attendance/representation at EDC Board and Executive Committee meetings (meetings at 4001 Mission Oaks Blvd, Camarillo; Executive Committee meets 1st Wednesday, full Board 3rd Thursday, both each month except July, full board does not meet in December, all meetings 3:30-5:00; with occasional changes in location).
 7. Interest and commitment to the EDC Mission for regional economic development, capacity to satisfy the scope of work and firm compatibility as demonstrated through the interview process.

IV. **SUBMITTAL OF QUALIFICATIONS**

To obtain the maximum degree of comparability for a uniform review process, proposals must be organized as follows, all in a single pdf document:

- A. **Title Page, Firm Profile, Name and Location of the Primary Lead Counsel Representing the Firm for this Engagement**
1. Include the name of your firm, local address, and telephone number; state the name of the contact person for the proposal, and date.
 2. State whether the firm is local, national, or international.
 3. Provide the location of the primary office from which services to EDC are to be provided.
 4. Provide the name of the lead counsel proposed for this engagement.
- B. **Summary of Firm's Qualifications**
1. **Scope of Work:** In a narrative summary **not to exceed four pages** provide a succinct response to each of the Scope of Work elements identified in Sections II.A & B above.

Please provide the responses in the same order as outlined in Sections II.A & B.

2. **Relevant Experience, References:** On one page separate from the narrative requested above, briefly list and describe three other engagements that have some similarity or other relevance for demonstrating capacity for providing the services identified in the Scope of Work above (Section II.A & B).

Include for each of these a reference, contact information to include name, title, phone number, organizational affiliation.

C. Fee Structure:

1. Include proposed fee structure/hourly rates.
2. Identify any pro bono contribution, if any (e.g., defining some percent of total hourly billing or some defined set of consultation provided pro bono, for regular meeting attendance or other), and/or provide a demonstration of reduced rates from regular billing.

D. Submittal Instructions:

1. The submittal must be received by **10:00 a.m. on Friday, October 18, 2024**. Late proposals will not be accepted.
2. Submittals are to be presented in a single pdf document, with **"Legal Counsel Quote" in the email subject line.**
3. **Submittals will only be accepted via email to Monica Estrella, Grants & Contracts Manager, monica@edcollaborative.com.**
4. All submittals received will be provided a receipt for their submission by email confirmation. If you do not receive an emailed confirmation, or you wish to call and verify receipt, you may contact Monica Estrella at: (805) 702-8353.
5. All other questions or correspondence concerning this request for qualifications should be directed to: Bruce Stenslie, President/CEO, (805) 794-0455, bruce@edcollaborative.com.

V. SUMMARY, NEGOTIATION, ENGAGEMENT LETTER

EDC reserves the right to reject any and all proposals submitted and to request additional information from those making proposals.

The award will be made to the firm, which, in the opinion of EDC, is best qualified.

After selection of contractor, EDC reserves the right to enter into negotiations with the contractor for this scope of work as presented, and/or for additional work and/or to further define work requirements for the engagement period.

While the engagement is intended for a five-year period, with EDC's discretion for extension, EDC may elect to negotiate an engagement for fewer than five years.

No services may be authorized or invoiced without a jointly agreed to and approved engagement letter. EDC reserves the right to terminate any approved engagement at its sole discretion.