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## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

### Introduction

The Center for Planning Excellence (CPEX) is a non-profit organization that coordinates urban and rural community planning efforts in South Louisiana. CPEX introduces best-practice models, innovative planning policies and technical assistance to communities who want to create and enact Smart Growth plans, policies and projects that address infrastructure needs, environmental issues and quality design for the built environment. CPEX also connects communities with the most respected planning firms in the nation to assist communities in realizing their potential through inclusive planning processes and long-term visioning.

CPEX is issuing for a Request for Proposals (RFP) from four short-listed consultant teams, based on the outcome of an RFQ selection process, for the creation of a Model Development Code (MDC). The MDC will be a set of model zoning codes and other relevant development regulations that local jurisdictions could select from, cafeteria-style, or adopt *in toto* as a unified development code. The MDC should be innovative and flexible enough to serve as a model for all of Louisiana's varied communities, and it should be user-friendly enough to be easily and affordably administered even in areas with limited local capacity. The MDC must reflect Smart Growth principles—mixed uses, housing and transportation choice, certainty, fiscal responsibility, open space preservation—and consistency with the Louisiana Speaks Regional Plan.

### Background: Planning in Louisiana, Before and Since the Hurricanes of 2005

As outlined in [Offshore Petroleum Development and the Comprehensive Planning Process](#), Louisiana's history demonstrates little coordinated planning efforts and a marked lack of planning capacity, particularly at the local level (<http://www.gomr.mms.gov/PI/PDFImages/ESPIS/3/3633.pdf>). Louisiana does not have a state entity that assists or coordinates communities undergoing comprehensive planning processes, nor do the majority of jurisdictions have planning staff. Additionally, many Parishes do not have zoning ordinances, and those that do typically have use-based ("Euclidean") zoning with language dating back to the 1920s. This lack of planning and planning capacity throughout the state has contributed to haphazard development patterns, urban disinvestment, environmental degradation, and exposure to natural-disaster hazards.

After the hurricanes of 2005, extreme population shifts occurred and many smaller jurisdictions exceeded their 20-year growth forecast in a matter of days. Suddenly small communities were experiencing growth impacts such as traffic congestion, housing demand and infrastructure costs without a planning framework in place to address these issues. When FEMA emergency response teams began to work on restoring communities, they were dismayed to find few existing plans available in order to set a unified vision for rebuilding. Most parishes did not even have the required hazard-mitigation plans.

The need for planning resources in Louisiana is unprecedented, yet there is no single resource to ensure citizens, developers, and leaders have access to the best information necessary to make strategic planning

decisions that will have a profound effect on the future of Louisiana families, businesses, and communities. CPEX was created to fill this gap in Louisiana.

CPEX, in cooperation with the Louisiana Recovery Authority, facilitated a massive planning process—the creation of a regional plan that garnered public input from approximately 27,000 individuals. The Louisiana Speaks Regional Plan was completed in May 2007 ([www.louisianaspeaks.org](http://www.louisianaspeaks.org)). The Regional Plan assisted the state in organizing the next steps Louisiana should take toward the main objectives identified by Louisiana citizens—recover sustainably, grow smarter, and think regionally. One of the many action items described in the Regional Plan is to develop a MDC for the state.

Throughout the planning process, the plan objectives were coordinated with the objectives of another ongoing planning process—the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority’s Intergrated Ecosystem Restoration and Hurricane Protection: Louisiana’s Comprehensive Master Plan for a Sustainable Coast (<http://lacpra.org>). The coastal master plan is the first state effort to simultaneously address both restoration and protection measures in Louisiana. The model ordinances shall be coordinated with the on-going efforts of the CPRA to ensure consistency in Louisiana’s approach to properly managing sensitive ecosystems, wetland restoration, land management along the coast, and hazard mitigation techniques.

At the same time the Louisiana Speaks plan and the CPRA Master Plan were being created, Louisiana Economic Development (LED) was underway with a Community Development Strategy project intended to provide tools to assist communities throughout the state with development. The overall goal of the LED project is to develop needed tools and best practices to assist Louisiana parishes in sustainable growth that leads to a higher quality of life with more opportunities. To provide maximum benefit, it was important that LED identify the tools that are most needed in the state. So LED conducted a statewide on-line opinion survey of local leaders between November and December 2006. The survey gathered opinions on community and economic development factors at the community, parish, regional and state level. The number one liability identified was “planning/visioning factors such as unified vision for economic development, effective planning, effective implementation of plans, and ability to work together to avoid factionalism.” Therefore, LED was interested in providing a set of model ordinances to assist communities with land-use planning.

CPEX and LED are partnering to provide the model ordinances, or codes and regulations for use by the individual communities and/or Parishes to implement their Comprehensive (Master) Plans. CPEX is also partnering with the Louisiana Municipal Association, the Police Jury Association, and the Louisiana Realtors Association to reach out to their members and keep them abreast of our process.

### **Deliverables**

These “model” ordinances should be drafted utilizing research of best practices throughout the world. The MDC should be designed so that communities and parishes will be able to freely utilize any portion of the model ordinances—“cafeteria”-style—and to tailor them to address unique situations and conditions in the communities and/or parishes. Alternatively, communities will be able to adopt the MDC, *in toto* and as written, as a unified development code (UDC). CPEX therefore expects the deliverables to approximate the following:

#### **1. The MDC**

- A web-based document containing a “cafeteria” version of ordinances and an integrated UDC that can easily be accessed and downloaded. This will be made available to websites of the LED, CPEX, LRA, Louisiana Speaks and others (including a future Office of State Planning).



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→ *The set of ordinances should have components that address unique conditions to South Louisiana, including but not limited to: wetlands conservation, hazard mitigation, historic preservation, rural and agricultural uses, residential and commercial development, street design, transportation and housing elements, drainage and stormwater issues, subdivision and open space regulations.*

## 2. Implementation and Administration Guidance Materials

- A workbook or “how-to” guide that will provide the jurisdictions with a methodology for implementation/adoption, including guidance on how a municipality or parish would adapt and adopt individual ordinances or the entire UDC. This guide will be usable by communities with limited local planning or implementation capacity as well as those with sophisticated planning regimes in place.
- Basic guidance on administration of the adopted MDC elements, including recommended permitting structures, review methodologies, appeals and variance processes, etc.
- A selection of case-studies with illustrative land-use maps demonstrating how various districts would support the goals of a comprehensive plan. This includes examples of plans and their related land development codes that are consistent and integrated.

## 3. Communications Materials

- A PowerPoint presentation that CPEX and others can use during the process to educate possible end users on the MDC.

CPEX staff will work with the Consultant Team to facilitate the process. Consultants will also interface with a working committee(s) comprised of local officials, planners, lawyers, key state agency officials, and potential end users to receive feedback during the ordinance drafting process. Consultants shall also interface with professional planning teams that are developing comprehensive land-use plans in Tangipahoa Parish (Kendig Keast Collaborative) and West Feliciana Parish (Fregonese Associates). These one-year planning processes are ongoing between March 2007- September 2008. The land use plan teams and the MDC team will work cooperatively to craft documents that are consistent with each other so that the MDC will support the policies contained in the land use plans.

### **Deadline for Submission**

Proposals should be received no later than Monday, **September 26**, 2007 by 5:00 p.m. CST. Packages should be mailed to: Center for Planning Excellence, Attn: Camille Manning-Broome, 402 N. Fourth Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802.

Teams are expected to present in Louisiana the week of October 8, 2007. Please provide Camille Manning-Broome with your availability.

### **Submission Requirements**

Applicants should submit 12 identical copies of a thoughtful, clear and well-organized proposal package that includes the components listed below. Expenses incurred by the respondents in replying to the RFP or in making any appearance before the Review Committee are at the respondents' own expense and risk.

- Proposed Scope of Services, including the following:
  - **Methodology:** Please describe how you are going to tackle the MDC project to create an effective tool for providing Louisiana communities with a set of zoning and development ordinances that are easily administered, including in areas with little local capacity. Also include your methodology for “road-testing” the code to make sure it actually achieves the ends it promotes, is user-friendly to both developers and administrators, can either be tailored to a municipality’s existing zoning and master plan or adopted in toto (including in areas with very limited capacity), and is consistent with Louisiana law.
  - Detailed description of each deliverable.
  - Please describe your philosophy for to making the MDC meaningful enough to be a usable tool on the ground, yet generic enough to be relevant to a wide variety of kinds of places.

(Please note: there is no set scope so be creative in laying out a plan).

- Please make sure you address the Selection Criteria (below).
- Proposed timeline and fee schedule. (Please include a projected budget for the creation of the model codes, with the following two additional options: (1) an option for a comprehensive coastal zoning ordinance, including work on transfer of development rights, and (2) direct code implementation for at least one community).
- Key team member resumes (Please tell us which team members have the following responsibilities: (1) project manager and point-of-contact and (2) key personal outlining specific duties, and (3) who exactly will be authoring and reviewing the ordinances and deliverables).
- Please provide 2 examples of your best and most illustrative code work that might be comparable to this project (this may be in the form of a paper document, CD-ROM, or web link).
- A written statement acknowledging that the ordinances you deliver will be a free resource to all communities and therefore not proprietary.
- A written statement indicating whether your firm’s current or proposed employees are or have been in the past five years under Investigation or review by any Governmental Authority or similar agency. If there is any investigation or review, provide detailed information regarding the process. (Note that “Governmental Authority” means any domestic or foreign national, super national, regional, state or local government, any political subdivision thereof or any other governmental, quasi-governmental, regulatory, administrative, judicial, public or statutory instrumentality, authority, body, agency, court, department, bureau or entity.)

### Selection Criteria

- **Qualification of Team.** Particular attention will be given to teams with the following: team make-up including an AICP planner and/or a land use attorney; extensive experience in authoring codes that employ smart growth principles (please list the number of codes authored by key personal);
- **Specialized Experience.** MDC projects that incorporate urban, suburban and especially rural areas; MDC projects involving water conservation and preservation of wetlands, bayous and/or marshes; experience working at multi-jurisdictional scale; and the ability to work effectively with parallel on-going planning processes.



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- **Record of Implementation Ability.** Experience in public participation process to build constituency for implementation; developing plans and implementation tools and techniques intended to achieve the goals and objectives of the plans; past ordinance adoption.
- **Effective Outreach.** Clear demonstration of prior experience conducting effective outreach to elected and appointed officials.
- **Quality of Performance History.** Demonstration of effective cost control, work quality, adherence to schedules/deadlines.
- **Louisiana Experience/Knowledge.** Knowledge of key planning issues and influences impacting Louisiana and its parishes.
- **Flexibility and Creativity.** Special attention will be given to teams who express a clear understanding in drafting and implementing flexible ordinances that may be tailored to a Comprehensive Plan or easily adopted in areas with limited local capacity. Attention will be given to teams that layout a creative and meaningful plan of action.

#### **Point-of-Contact**

Respondents shall restrict all contact and questions regarding this RFP and selection process to the individual named herein. Questions concerning terms, conditions and technical specifications shall be directed in writing to: Center for Planning Excellence, Attn: Camille Manning-Broome, Principal Planner, Louisiana Community Planning Program, 402 N. Fourth Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802 OR via email at [Camille.mbroome@c-pex.org](mailto:Camille.mbroome@c-pex.org) (preferred). You are welcome to send any questions, at any time, to Camille Manning-Broome who will in turn make the questions and responses available to all the teams.

Respondents and their agents are strictly prohibited from lobbying employees or board members of any Louisiana state agency or entity, CPEX staff and board, the Baton Rouge Area Foundation staff and board, or anyone connected to this RFP at any time in the application and selection process. Failure to comply with this clause shall be grounds for rejection of their RFP as non-responsive.

#### **Budget**

CPEX was awarded a grant from the Louisiana Economic Development in the amount of \$300,000.00 for the development of a MDC. This fund will be allocated to a selected Consultant team in a lump sum which is to cover all travel and project related expenses. CPEX is seeking additional funds for the project from various sources –please comment on the sufficiency of this budget for this project.

#### **Proposal Reviews/Interviews/Selection**

A panel of experts in areas including legal, land use, zoning codes and Smart Growth principles will review the proposals and be involved in the interview. All teams being solicited for this RFP will be asked to interview in **October** 2007 in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Camille Manning-Broome will email you the preferred date, once she has received availability from all teams.

Consideration is expected to be given, but is not guaranteed to be given, to the weighted criteria listed on this page. CPEX reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, to waive any and all formalities outlined

in the RFP and in the selection process and generally to make the award that in its judgment, will best meet the objectives stated in this RFP.

Upon notification of selection by the Review Committee, the successful respondent is required to execute and deliver a contract within two weeks of notification. If the successful respondent is unwilling or unable to execute the agreement as required by the RFP, CPEX has the right to request another respondent to enter into the contract with CPEX.

All dates in the RFP are subject to change at the discretion of CPEX, and notice of any changes will be provided to all respondents.