

MAPC RFP SP 2023
Proposer's Conference
Addendum #2
April 13th, 2023

Introduction:

MAPC: We started this process in the fall hoping to find a consultant to do the Diversity Equity and Inclusion Assessment (DEIA) and the Strategic Plan, but we decided to split them into two separate, but connected processes. We are expecting to start the DEIA shortly. We are committed to a strategic planning process that incorporates the findings of the DEIA.

In terms of "why a strategic plan?" A little over one year ago we released MetroCommon 2050, the 30-year plan for the greater Boston region. It's a sprawling document that identified actions for cities and towns as well as the legislature and the governor's office. We are hoping that the strategic plan draws on MetroCommon 2050, but distills that big plan into more of a playbook for the next three to five years, including a clear work plan and purpose. In addition to topical work, we want to examine our external relationships and outcomes.

At any given time, we are doing more than 100 planning projects. And at the end of each of those projects we hand over a product to our partner and move onto another project. We are interested in bringing in an outside consultant to explore that model and how to make it as successful as possible.

Question and Answer

Q1: As you think about the two processes (DEIA and Strategic Plan), have you thought about how you want to synchronize them?

A1: We have a plan, but I am not sure it's 100% finalized. We want to make sure we aren't duplicating efforts. We've planned the DEIA to be more internal facing, making recommendations about MAPC policy and workplace culture. We've designed the Strategic Plan to focus more on external strategies like how we work with partners and what work we want to focus on.

With that said, equity is the overriding objective of both planning processes and we know that these can't be separate processes. The DEIA and Strategic Plan should be integrated. It is advantageous to have them integrated. And our commitment is to have that happen.

We have an advisory committee that oversees both processes. It is made up of staff as well as members of our Executive Committee, which acts as MAPC's board. We've charged them with making sure the two plans are integrated and complementary.

Q2: Can you talk a little more about the tools to track plan progress and implementation that you're hoping the winning consultant will help you develop?

A2: In the Strategic Planning and DEIA processes we want a plan we can implement so we want clear recommendations that state who is responsible for doing what, by when, and a tool for keeping track of what's getting done and what's next to be done. We want to be able to keep ourselves accountable.

Q3: Is the expectation that you're going to submit an NSRA? Is that one of the outcomes you are looking for?

A3: No.

Q4: Can you talk a little bit about the representation on the planning committee. We talked about the advisory group, but who is the group that's rolling up their sleeves.

A4: The advisory committee and our executive team will be most involved.

We spent a lot of time assembling the Advisory Committee so that it would be diverse in terms of race, gender, and years of experience. We tried to balance the committee to make sure there was no perspective that we were missing.

The executive team is our long serving Executive Director and our Deputy Director of Public Affairs, Lizzi Weyant. There is an empty Deputy Director position that we hope to fill during the Strategic Planning process.

What makes us a little bit unique, and what is challenging about our work, is that we have 15 different departments and we all have a certain amount of entrepreneurial room to navigate, regarding who we work with, how we try to raise funds, and where we initiate projects. So sometimes we aren't all working towards the same goal. We want the Strategic Plan "playbook" to describe where we want to be, but not in too regimented a way that we lose the entrepreneurial/innovative spirit while pursuing the most impactful and equitable outcomes.

Q5: Earlier you talked about how the DEIA will really look at the internal culture and the Strategic Plan the external, and then a moment ago you talked about implementation and metrics and wanting to have a sense of how we measure progress. At some point in a strategic planning process you set the goals and talk about how you are going to deploy your internal resources, not just money, but people and expertise. So, is that the point at which the two processes come together? And if so, then the Strategic Plan is not exclusively externally focused, but reflects a bit of the work that's being done internally as well?

A5: Just as we said DEIA is internal, but it can't be 100% internally focused because this kind of work shows up internally and externally. One of the things we talk about exploring is better rising to the challenges of thorny multi-disciplinary problems. We might get called in for a housing problem and realize there is also an attached climate change challenge. We want our consultants to help us figure out where collaboration should happen and how to better enable that.

About the RFP: We recommend that you please follow the submission guidelines detailed in the RFP. Use the forms in the order in which they've been provided.