

MCEC RFP: MARKET DEVELOPMENT AND GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE ANALYSIS OF GEOTHERMAL PROJECTS IN BALTIMORE CITY



Questions and Answers – December 1, 2025

1. Reference: RFP Section 2.17

Question: Will this be a single award type contract or are you considering developing a pool of consultants with different expertise?

Answer: Per Section 2.17 of the RFP, MCEC contemplates making one award but will consider making multiple awards based on the expertise demonstrated in the received proposals. Vendors are encouraged to highlight their strengths and experience in each area where they can add value

2. Reference: Schedule

Question: Would MCEC consider extending the proposal due date? We acknowledge that MCEC is operating under MIF program deadlines and would like to make an award decision by December 1.

Answer: MCEC will be extending the due date to December 5, 2025. A revised RFP will be posted to MCEC's [RFP Bulletin Board](#).

3. Reference: RFP Section 2.7

Question: Could MCEC confirm the email address to which proposals should be submitted? Section 2.7 notes proposals should be submitted to the Procurement Officer – Section 1.2 notes the Procurement Officer as brupert@mdcleanenergy.org, but 2.7 provides a different email address (Imingo@mdcleanenergy.com).

Answer: Please submit your proposals to Limunga Mingo at: Imingo@mdcleanenergy.org

4. Reference: RFP Section 4.1.7

Question: If a project developer is part of the selected consultant team (e.g., as a subcontractor) for this scope of work, would the developer be precluded from working on projects that result from this public-private partnership plan?

Answer: This planning phase is what is currently being funded by the grant. However, to avoid any conflict of interest or unfair advantage in subsequent procurements, and because the resulting plan will shape the scope of the next phase, participation in this phase will very likely preclude a vendor from bidding on future RFPs that result from this plan.

5. Reference: RFP Section 4.2

Question: Does MCEC have a specific budget or budget range for this scope of work, understanding the MIF grant amount is \$250,000? If so, could MCEC share the budget amount?

Answer: MCEC is not sharing budget information for this solicitation at this time.

6. Reference: RFP Section 8

Question: Where can I find the Appendices. They don't appear attached to the RFP.

Answer: Apologies for the oversight. MCEC has posted a revised RFP to the RFP Bulletin Board, which includes all attachments.

7. Reference: RFP Schedule

Question: Can I please request at least a 2-week extension?

Answer: Please see our answer to question 2 above.

8. Reference: RFP Section 3

Question: Can MCEC provide system size (MBH) estimates for each of the potential pilot sites included?

Answer: After award, the selected vendor(s) will be briefed with project details, designs, and load analysis, as available for each project.

9. Reference: RFP Section 4.2

Question: Does the cost of the test bore need to be included in the base project budget, or can it be presented as an add-alternate? A site walk will need to be conducted in order to provide anything beyond a high-level cost estimate for the test bore.

Answer: An add-alternate cost presentation is sufficient.

10. Reference: RFP Section 4.2

Question: Are only high-level (conceptual) cost estimates expected, or should proposals include preliminary engineering-level assumptions?

Answer: We are seeking high-level, conceptual cost estimates and potential total cost of ownership benefits.

11. Reference: RFP General

Question: How does this effort relate to the ongoing Utility Thermal Energy Networks (UTENs) initiative? Is this work limited to municipal ownership models?

Answer: A goal of this partnership plan is to evaluate ownership models, and make recommendations. This can be any form of ownership and should not be limited to municipal ownership models.

We are in communication with the Utility for the WARMTH Act Pilot and recommendations, incentives, and soft cost changes from the MIF opportunity may have benefits to that Pilot

12. Reference: RFP Section 3

Question: Should the proposed P3 structure address only the development and construction of a Thermal Energy Network (TEN), or also include long-term (Day-2) operations?

Answer: The study is to evaluate best practices and make recommendations for structures, both in development and construction, and long-term.

13. Reference: RFP Section 3

Question: Is there a list of minimum stakeholder engagement tasks or deliverables that MCEC would like incorporated into the proposal?

Answer: Part, the minimum is engaging with those potential projects listed. Additionally, the approach for broader engagement will be an evaluation of the response.

14. Reference: RFP Section 4.2

Question: Can MCEC provide a fee sheet or cost table to clarify how division of tasks and associated fees should be presented?

Answer: Firm are encouraged to outline how their proposed tasks, subtasks, and associated fees align with their approach and expertise.

15. Reference: RFP Section 5.2

Question: Can MCEC confirm whether resumes and required forms (D-1A, Bid/Proposal Affidavit, etc.) are excluded from the 10-page narrative limit?

Answer: MCEC confirms that resumes and required forms are excluded from the 10-page limit.

16. Reference: RFP Section 1.6

Question: Will proposers receive a confirmation email upon electronic submission, and is there a preferred subject line or file-naming convention?

Answer: Yes! MCEC will confirm receipt via email. Vendors should ensure that the RFP title is referenced in the subject of their email.

17. Reference: RFP General

Question: Will the selected consultant be eligible to participate in subsequent phases of the Municipal Investment Fund program (e.g., project implementation or P3 deployment support), or will those phases be separately procured?

Answer: Please see our answer to question 4 above.

18. Reference: RFP General

Question: Can MCEC confirm whether the consultant is expected to perform primary data collection (e.g., site visits, stakeholder interviews) or if analysis will rely solely on existing datasets provided by MCEC and the City?

Answer: The Market and Governance Structure analysis will be high-level and informed by data provided by MCEC, the City, and/or project partners.

19. Reference: RFP Section 8

Question: The RFP appears to be missing all appendices. Can you please provide?

Answer: Please see our response to question 6 above.

20. Reference: RFP Section 2.21

Question: Section 2.21 refers to the term for March 31st, 2026. This assumes a contract signing date of December 1st, correct? Will it be adjusted accordingly for delays?

Answer: The term aligns with the grant's timeline for receipt of partnership plans.

21. Reference: RFP Section 2.22

Question: Item J on page 11 of 19 references liquidated damages. Will MCEC consider waiving liquidated damages for this contract?

Answer: Unfortunately, MCEC cannot waive this requirement at this time.

22. Reference: RFP Section 3

Question: Can you clarify our role for Item #2 – Financial Analysis Support & Recommendations.” It says, “Supporting MCEC...” Does this mean MCEC will be leading this effort? Can you provide more insight into your work on this to-date to help us estimate the level of effort for this scope item.

Answer: MCEC has extensive experience completing capital stacks and providing financial support for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. However, it has not yet provided such support for a geothermal project. This will be a high-level review of MCEC’s procedures to ensure that available incentives are captured and to develop capital stack design recommendations both generally and for one or more projects.

23. Reference: RFP General

Question: Will the firm (or team of firms) who perform these services be precluded from sitting on the future “developer’s” side of the P3 table? If not, they could be a conflicted party in providing “recommendations of partner firms for geothermal design, engineering, and management.”

Answer: Please see answer to question 4 above.

24. Reference: RFP Section 3

Question: Under Scope item #3, it states, “Evaluate the current process in Baltimore...” is this a typo? Is it meant to say “Evaluate the current permitting process in Baltimore...”?

Answer: To clarify, MCEC requests that Offerors evaluate the current permitting process in Baltimore City and the State of Maryland.

25. Reference: RFP Section 3

Question: Under Scope item #4, can you provide approximately addresses for each of these sites? Are these to be considered the “Primary Recommended Site” Should our budget assume a test bore at each of these 4 sites?

Answer: At this stage, we are seeking high-level, conceptual cost estimates and potential total cost of ownership benefits. Addresses and details will be shared

post-award. Ideally the most suitable location will include a test bore. The test bore should be a separate cost.

26. Reference: RFP Section 3

Question: For the final PS Plan deliverable, are you expecting this to be a full narrative-style report or a presentation-style would be more acceptable?

Answer: A full narrative-style report is expected. However, there is flexibility, and we prefer a concise narrative supported by data and other relevant information, which does not need to be presented in narrative form.

27. Reference: RFP Section 3

Question: Can you please confirm appendices are excluded from the page count?

Answer: Please see response to question 15 above.

28. Reference: RFP Section 4.2

Question: Do you have an estimated budget for this effort? This will be very helpful to guide proposers in right-sizing our efforts.

Answer: Please see response to question 5 above.

29. Reference: RFP Schedule

Question: Respectfully requesting a 2-week extension to the due date.

Answer: Please see response to question 2 above.

30. Reference: RFP General

Question: Would participating in this project preclude a company from participating in future phases?

Answer: Please see response to question 4 above.

31. Reference: RFP General

Question: Will MCEC lead stakeholder coordination or is this the consultant's responsibility?

Answer: This is the Consultant's responsibility and MCEC and the City of Baltimore will assist/support.

32. Reference: RFP Section 5.2

Question: Is there a preferred format for the final public-private partnership plan? (e.g., memo, report, slide deck).

Answer: Not currently. We are awaiting guidance from CGC/ICLEI (the funders) on the final reporting.

33. Reference: RFP Section 3

Question: Will this be strictly limited to networked geothermal or will non-networked geothermal be included in an analysis? It's important to have both tools in the toolbox for this planning effort.

Answer: The goal is supporting geothermal development, both networked and non-networked.

34. Reference: RFP Section 3

Question: Is there a standard contract provided by MCEC, or will the terms and conditions be negotiated between the parties after the contract is awarded?

Answer: MCEC's service contract template is attached as Appendix 2 of the RFP.

35. Reference: RFP Section 2.22

Question: Must the MBE subcontractor be based in Maryland, or can it be located in another state if it holds federal certification?

Answer: There is a waiver process if offerors don't meet the qualifications or 30% requirement.

36. Reference: RFP Section 2.21

Question: Is there a defined maximum or expected timeframe for completing the project?

Answer: Section 2.21 of the RFP specifies the term of the project as March 31, 2026, in alignment with the grant timeline.

37. Reference: RFP Section 3

Question: The RFP specifies analysis of five developments. Is there an expectation on the number of additional projects to analyze beyond these five?

Answer: As this is the first stage for partnership and market development, the hope is to set a foundation for proceeding with one of these early projects, and creating a market for future projects.

38. Reference: RFP Section 3

Question: What level of detail will be provided regarding the five projects mentioned in the RFP?

Answer: See response to question 8.

39. Reference: RFP Section 3

Question: Does the scope cover only geothermal projects for building decarbonization, or should energy generation using geothermal resources also be considered?

Answer: Section 1.1 of the RFP states: "While the primary focus is on district geothermal systems, the analysis should also identify relevant connections and complementary strategies involving solar energy, energy storage, and broader building decarbonization initiatives that support the City's goal of achieving carbon neutrality by 2045."

40. Reference: RFP Section 2.22

Question: What MBE paperwork needs to be submitted with the proposal?

Answer: Vendors should complete and submit the MBE Utilization and Fair Solicitation Affidavit, Attachment D-1A of the MBE forms linked in Section 2.22 (b) of the RFP.

41. Reference: RFP Section 5.2

Question: Does Appendix 3: Contract Affidavit need to be submitted with the proposal or post-award?

Answer: The Contract Affidavit does not need to accompany proposals. It can be completed post-award.

42. Reference: RFP Section 5.2

Question: What is included in the 10-page limit? Are forms, MBE paperwork, transmittal letter, and/or cost excluded?

Answer: Please see MCEC's response to question 15 above.

43. Reference: RFP Section 3

Question: Regarding the test bore mentioned under the Project Prioritization task, our assumption is that the actual test bore is NOT in the consultant's scope, is this correct?

Answer: Please see MCEC's response to questions 9 and 25 above.

44. Reference: RFP Section 4.1.7

Question: Can you clarify the circumstances that would be considered a conflict of interest for future phases? Specifically: (a) does MCEC or the City anticipate funding or leading the design, construction, or operation of networked geothermal systems; and (b) would the conflict restriction apply only to organizations that may be active participants in P3 partnerships, or also to firms providing design and engineering services?

Answer: The conflict-of-interest considerations stem from the fact that the plan resulting from this phase of work will shape the scope and requirements of future phases. To avoid any unfair competitive advantage for firms involved in developing this plan, participation in this phase will very likely preclude firms from bidding on procurements that result from it.

- (a) At this time, neither MCEC nor the City can definitely state whether they will fund the networked geothermal systems.
- (b) The conflict of interest would apply to any firm participating in this planning phase, including firms providing design, engineering and technical services. The goal is to ensure a fair and transparent procurement process for any future work that stems from the plan.

Please see response to question 4 for additional information.