

**Invitation to Negotiate (“ITN 160101”)**  
**Strategic Business Plan**  
**The Northwest Florida Business Development Council, Inc.**  
**dba**  
**“Opportunity Florida”**

Notice is hereby given that the Northwest Florida Business Development Council, Inc. (“NWFBC”) is requesting sealed responses for *Invitation to Negotiate (“ITN 160101”) Strategic Business Plan* as also noticed on the following Internet Web Site: [www. opportunityflorida.com](http://www.opportunityflorida.com). This strategic planning process will result in a comprehensive plan that will guide Opportunity Florida and its member partners in taking action forward by moving rural northwest Florida toward economic parity with the state and nation. It will outline goals and objectives that provide guidance for priorities based on considerable input from a variety of stakeholders, and consensus on priority goals and emerging opportunities for action. The plan will create a framework for building on past actions and activities to help Rural Northwest Florida move forward.

The Northwest Florida Business Development Council (“NWFBC”) is a non-profit 501-C-6 economic development organization serving primarily within the Northwest Florida Rural Area of Opportunity (RAO) which includes a nine county region comprised of Calhoun, Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, Liberty, Washington, Wakulla and the Town of Freeport. The work to be completed pursuant to ITN 160101 will be funded through State of Florida Regional Rural Development Grant D0079 administered through the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO). Regional Rural Development Grant D0079 will be posted to the [opportunityflorida.com](http://www.opportunityflorida.com) website for reference.

Scope of Work

The Northwest Florida Business Development Council, Inc. (dba “Opportunity Florida”) seeks services from a qualified facilitator and writer (“consultant, facilitator, contractor”) to assist the organization in development of its first strategic business plan (hereinafter “strategic plan”). The consultant will work closely with Opportunity Florida, its member EDOs, county and private partners to shape this plan over the course of a period beginning in January 2016, and concluding no later than the end of March 2016.

The scope of work includes some or all of the following activities, based on consultant expertise and Opportunity Florida needs:

- Work session(s) with Opportunity Florida staff and officer(s) to shape the planning process;
- Meeting design and facilitation for public listening session(s) in the Rural Northwest Florida Region;
- Meeting design and facilitation for an input session(s) with members of Rural Northwest Florida's local economic development organizations;
- Meeting design and facilitation for an input session(s) with members of Rural Northwest Florida's local county and city governmental units;
- Deployment of tools or processes for gathering input from the public online through social media or similar venues;
- Work session with Opportunity Florida Board and staff to synthesize major themes and critical issues identified through input sessions;
- Work session with Opportunity Florida board and staff to reach consensus on organization vision, mission, strategic goals, objectives, and activities
- Writing and design of the strategic plan document

This ITN is soliciting responses from qualified contractors with specific economic development planning experience and knowledge of the aforementioned counties and region. **Successful responses must acknowledge and commit to their ability to fast-track the project for completion in form and content acceptable to NWFBC by the required date of March 31, 2016.**

## Important Information for Prospective Respondents

NWFBDC will post any relevant project information on its website, [www.opportunityflorida.com](http://www.opportunityflorida.com). Typed copies of this *Invitation to Negotiate* may be requested by contacting Susan Estes at [susane@opportunityflorida.com](mailto:susane@opportunityflorida.com) or by calling 850-633-4118.

**Sealed, written responses for the Project will be received by NWFBDC at Opportunity Florida, 4636 US Highway 90, Suite K, Marianna, Florida 32446, on or before Tuesday, January 5, 2016, at 12:00 noon central time (CST). Any responses received after the designated receiving time provided herein, will be returned, unopened.**

Any questions about the Project must be delivered by electronic mail to Susan Estes at [susane@opportunityflorida.com](mailto:susane@opportunityflorida.com) no later than noon on December 30, 2015. Answers to questions will be posted within 72 hours to the [opportunityflorida.com](http://www.opportunityflorida.com) Internet web site.

All responses must be submitted with one (1) signed original marked "Original" and four (4) copies marked "Copy," in a sealed package addressed to Jim Brook, Executive Director, Opportunity Florida, 4636 Hwy 90, Suite K, Marianna, Florida 32446, and marked with the notation, Invitation to Negotiate ("ITN 160101") Strategic Business Plan, including the applicable ITN number and title on the sealed package.

Response packages must be complete and received by the date and time due to be considered. Successful respondents will be notified by NWFBDC.

Minority Business Enterprises (MBE), Women Owned Business Enterprises (WBE), Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) are encouraged to participate. NWFBDC supports Equal Employment and Drug Free Workplace policies.

The NWFBDC reserves the right to accept or reject all responses and to waive any technicalities or irregularities therein. In the event that any or all responses submitted and considered are rejected or waived, NWFBDC reserves the right to re-advertise or otherwise solicit for qualified respondents or responses, or to cancel the project in its entirety. **Respondents to this invitation to negotiate will do so at their sole discretion and cost and shall indemnify and hold NWFBDC harmless against any and all costs and damages associated with this solicitation and project.** NWFBDC further reserves the right to cancel this request, or to award a contract to any firm whose response best satisfies the requirements of this ITN, at its sole discretion and determination.

**All times stated in this notice are Central Time**