



July 19, 2024

Request for Qualifications# 2024-012

BAY AREA
AIR QUALITY
MANAGEMENT
DISTRICT

CEQA Analyses for Air Quality Plans, Permits, and Rule Development

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SECTION I – SUMMARY

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (“Air District”) seeks qualified firms through this Request for Qualifications (“RFQ”) to provide California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) analyses for the Air District, State and/or federal air quality plans, Community Emissions Reduction Plans prepared pursuant to Assembly Bill (“AB”) 617, permits, and rule development projects. Services the selected bidder(s) may perform include: developing initial studies, negative declarations, environmental impact reports or other CEQA-related documents for planning, permits, and rule development projects as specified by the Air District.

The Air District may select one or more firms to provide the services outlined in this RFQ. The Air District anticipates entering in Master Service Agreements with the selected firms and issuing Task Orders for specific work. The Air District anticipates the work to commence in 2024 and continue through June 2029. Contracts with firms may be extended, subject to funding availability and the organization’s performance. A firm’s selection and the execution of a contract with the Air District does not guarantee any particular amount of work.

To respond to this RFQ, an interested firm should submit one (1) electronic copy (in Adobe Acrobat PDF file format) of its statement of qualification to the Air District’s Procurement Portal (“Portal”):

Michael Chao, Staff Specialist
Bay Area Air Quality Management District
375 Beale Street, Suite 600; San Francisco, CA 94105
Portal link: <https://baaqmd.bonfirehub.com>

**Statements of qualification must be received by 4:00 p.m. Pacific Time on Thursday, August 22, 2024 (“deadline”).
Late submissions will not be considered.**

Statements of qualification must address all information requested in this RFQ. A statement may add information not requested in this RFQ, but the information should be in addition to, not instead of, the requested information and format. Minority business enterprises, women's business enterprises, veteran's business enterprises, local businesses, and certified green businesses are encouraged to submit statements of qualifications. **Any questions regarding this RFQ should be submitted through the Portal.**

SECTION II – BACKGROUND

A. Air District Overview

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District is the government agency responsible for protecting air quality in the San Francisco Bay Area. The Air District is tasked with regulating stationary sources of air pollution in the nine counties that surround San Francisco Bay: Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, southwestern Solano, and southern Sonoma counties. It is governed by a 24-member Board of Directors composed of locally elected officials from each of the nine counties. The Air District's mission is to create a healthy breathing environment for every Bay Area resident, while protecting and improving public health, air quality and the global climate.

The Air District aims to achieve its mission through many strategic goals, including: reducing and eliminating health problems caused by air pollution, achieving and maintaining air quality standards, leading the Bay Area's efforts to fight global climate change, creating high-quality regulatory programs, and applying environmental best practices in all operations. To do so, the Air District regulates air pollution emissions from stationary emission sources such as factories, refineries, and power plants, and from smaller facilities like gas stations and dry cleaners. The Air District ensures that such facilities comply with air pollution laws and regulations, provides incentives to replace older, higher-emitting vehicles and equipment with cleaner alternatives, and gives grants and provides outreach to encourage healthy clean air choices by businesses and consumers. The Air District implements these efforts with an equity focus, aiming to reduce air quality disparities and promote environmental justice by targeting local air pollution in overburdened communities.

B. CEQA Analyses for Air Quality Plans, Permits, and Rule Development

As a public agency, the Air District takes an active part in the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) intergovernmental review process. In carrying out its CEQA duties, the Air District may act as a Lead Agency, a Responsible Agency, or a Reviewing

Agency. The Air District will be the Lead Agency for the adoption of all Air District plans, regulations, and rules. The Air District may also be the Lead Agency for some permit approvals.

As an example of the kinds of plans that the Air District adopts, the California Clean Air Act (“CCAA”) requires the Air District to develop and periodically update a plan to achieve and maintain State ambient air quality standards for ozone, carbon monoxide (“CO”), sulfur dioxide (“SO₂”), and nitrogen dioxide (“NO₂”) by the earliest practicable date (Health & Safety Code § 40910). The Bay Area has attained the CO, SO₂ and NO₂ standards. Because the region does not attain the State one and eight-hour ozone standards, the Bay Area is considered a nonattainment area for the State standards. The CCAA requires regions that do not meet the State ozone standards to prepare plans for attaining the standards and to update these plans every three years. These plans must include estimates of current and future emissions of the pollutants that form ozone (ozone precursors) and a control strategy that includes “all feasible measures” to reduce these emissions. The plan must also include measures to reduce transport of ozone and ozone precursors to neighboring regions.

The most recent plan is the Bay Area 2017 Clean Air Plan, which is a multi-pollutant strategy to simultaneously reduce emissions and ambient concentrations of ozone, fine particulate matter, toxic air contaminants, as well as greenhouse gases (“GHGs”) that contribute to climate change.

During this contract period, Air District staff may prepare a revision to the 2017 Clean Air Plan to include a triennial update to the Bay Area strategy to achieve the State ozone standards. The 2017 Clean Air Plan includes stationary source control measures, and measures to reduce emissions associated with transportation, energy use, buildings, agriculture, natural and working lands (including carbon sequestration capabilities or potential), waste management, water use, super GHGs, and measures that will be further studied in the future. Future revisions to the 2017 Clean Air Plan may result in the development of a new and/or revised control strategy to satisfy State ozone planning requirements and reduce emissions of other pollutants such as greenhouse gases. It is anticipated that an Environmental Impact Report (“EIR”) will be required for the update to the 2017 Clean Air Plan. To view a copy of the 2017 Clean Air Plan and EIR, go to the Air District website: <http://www.baaqmd.gov/plans-and-climate/air-quality-plans/current-plans>.

Further, the federal Clean Air Act (“CAA”) requires the Air District to develop and maintain a State Implementation Plan (“SIP”) when designated nonattainment for the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (“NAAQS”). Should NAAQS revisions result in nonattainment designations, the Air District may develop a federally enforceable SIP and an EIR may be required.

The Air District also publishes the Air District CEQA Guidelines to support lead agencies in evaluating air quality and GHG impacts. The Air District CEQA Guidelines may be updated to reflect increased health protective thresholds of significance, and to provide updated evaluation and modeling guidance. The most recent Air District CEQA Guidelines were published in 2023 and can be found on the Air District website: <https://www.baaqmd.gov/plans-and-climate/california-environmental-quality-act-ceqa/updated-ceqa-guidelines>.

Local air districts are also granted a general power to adopt rules and regulations to execute their various duties and reduce emissions of air pollutants throughout their jurisdiction. Many of these rules and regulations are intended to implement stationary source control measures included in air quality plans, such as the 2017 Clean Air Plan or AB 617 Community Emissions Reduction Plans. These rule development projects may require preparation of a negative declaration or EIR. To view additional information on the Air District's rule development process, visit the Air District website: <http://www.baaqmd.gov/rules-and-compliance/rule-development>.

In addition to adopting plans, regulations, and rules, the Air District has permitting authority over stationary sources of air pollution, such as refineries, chemical plants, and wastewater treatment plants. Because many permit applications also require approvals from counties or cities, those agencies will typically serve as the lead agency. However, in some cases, the Air District is the only agency with discretionary authority over an application and thus may need to prepare a negative declaration, EIR, or subsequent environmental review.

SECTION III – GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES

The Air District anticipates allocating approximately \$2,500,000 for CEQA analyses for air quality plans, permits, and rule development. Additional funds may be added in subsequent fiscal years, depending on the CEQA analysis needs. Expenditures will be based on the number of rule development projects, permits, and plans that need environmental analysis during each fiscal year, and the complexity of each analysis (negative declaration or environmental impact report). Services the selected bidder(s) may perform include developing initial studies, negative declarations, environmental impact reports or other CEQA-related documents for projects as specified by the Air District. The Air District anticipates entering into contracts with the selected bidder(s) for an initial term of five-years, from FY 2024-25 through FY 2028-29. A bidder's selection and the execution of a contract with the Air District does not guarantee any particular amount of work.

Selected bidders will prepare CEQA analyses and appropriate CEQA documents for air quality plans, permits, and rule development projects as specified by the Air District. Because CEQA documents for projects can vary in complexity and an initial study may dictate the need for a CEQA Negative Declaration or an Environmental Impact Report, on a case-by-case basis, the cost of any project cannot be estimated at this time. The Air District expects that payment will be based on time and materials required for each project and interested bidders should provide their fee information over the anticipated term of the contract of five years.

Selected firms will assist the Air District with one or more of the following services:

1. Preparation of Project-Level CEQA documents
2. Preparation of Plan-Level CEQA documents
3. Other CEQA support services

Respondents may choose to provide services for one or more of the services listed below and must use the checklist provided in Appendix A, Cover Page to specify the service categories they are qualified for and/or that best align with their area of expertise.

Service Category A: Preparation of Project-Level CEQA Documents

Services may include but are not limited to:

- a. Consultation and analysis regarding level of CEQA review and documentation required for a project.
- b. Preparation of initial studies, negative declarations, environmental impact reports, or other CEQA documents for Air District rulemaking projects.
- c. Preparation of initial studies, negative declarations, environmental impact reports, or other CEQA documents for Air District permitting projects.
- d. Preparation of initial studies, negative declarations, environmental impact reports, or other project-level CEQA documents.

Service Category B: Preparation of Plan-Level CEQA Documents

Services may include but are not limited to:

- a. Consultation and analysis regarding level of CEQA review and documentation required for a plan-level project.
- b. Preparation of initial studies, negative declarations, environmental impact reports, or other CEQA documents for Clean Air Plans, Attainment Plans, or AB 617 Community Emission Reduction Plans (to the extent they are not exempt from CEQA).
- c. Preparation of initial studies, negative declarations, environmental impact reports, or other CEQA documents for other air quality plans and plan-level projects.

Service Category C: Other CEQA Support Services

Services may include but are not limited to:

- a. Assistance and development of CEQA air quality and greenhouse gas thresholds, CEQA guidelines and updates, and other CEQA tools.
- b. Assistance with conducting CEQA public meetings and workshops, including meetings conducted in virtual/hybrid/in-person formats and outside of standard working hours (i.e. weeknights and weekends).

SECTION IV – SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

A. General

1. Interested firms must create an account through the Portal described in this RFQ to view RFQ documents and addenda, and to submit questions and statements of qualifications.
2. All statements of qualifications must be made in accordance with the conditions of this RFQ. Failure to address any of the requirements is grounds for rejection of the submission.
3. All information should be complete, specific, and as concise as possible.
4. Statements of qualifications should include any additional information that the bidder deems pertinent to the understanding and evaluation of the submission.

5. The Air District may modify the RFQ or issue supplementary information or guidelines during the submission preparation period prior to the deadline. Please check the [Portal](#) for updates prior to the deadline.
6. The Air District reserves the right to reject any and all submissions.
7. The Air District has established an estimated budget of Two Million Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$2,500,000) over a five (5) year period for this service.
8. All questions must be in written form and submitted through the Portal no later than **4:00 p.m. Pacific Time on Thursday, August 8, 2024**. Bidders will not be able to submit questions after this time. All questions will be answered in writing and posted on the [Portal](#) by **6:00 p.m. Pacific Time on Thursday, August 15, 2024**.
9. The cost for developing the statement of qualifications is the responsibility of the bidder, and shall not be chargeable to the Air District.
10. A firm's selection and the execution of a contract with the Air District does not guarantee any particular amount of work.

B. Submittal of Statement of Qualifications

All statement of qualifications must be submitted according to the specifications set forth in Section V (A) – Contents of Statement of Qualifications, and this section. Failure to adhere to these specifications may be cause for the rejection of the submission.

1. **Deadline** – All statement of qualifications are due no later than **4:00 p.m. Pacific Time on Thursday, August 22, 2024**, and must be submitted via the Portal to:

Michael Chao, Staff Specialist
Bay Area Air Quality Management District
375 Beale Street, Suite 600; San Francisco, CA 94105
Portal link: <https://baaqmd.bonfirehub.com>
2. **Uploading large documents** may take significant time, depending on the size of the file(s) and internet connection speed. Bidders should plan sufficient time before the deadline to finalize their submissions and complete the uploading process. Bidders will not be able to submit documents after the deadline. Submissions received after the deadline will not be considered.
3. **Signature** – All statements of qualifications must be signed by an authorized representative of the bidder.
4. **Submittal** – Submit one (1) electronic copy (in Adobe Acrobat PDF file format) to the Portal. Electronic submissions submitted via the Portal will be acknowledged with a confirmation email receipt. Late submissions will not be accepted. Any correction or re-submission of statement of qualifications will

not extend the submittal deadline.

5. Grounds for Rejection – A statement of qualification may be rejected at any time if it arrives after the deadline, or is not in the prescribed format, or is not signed by an individual authorized to represent the firm.
6. Disposition of the Submissions – All responses to this RFQ become property of the Air District and will be kept confidential until a recommendation for award of a contract has been announced. Thereafter, submittals are subject to public inspection and disclosure under the California Public Records Act. If a respondent believes that any portion of its submittal is exempt from public disclosure, it may mark that portion “confidential.” The Air District will use reasonable means to ensure that such confidential information is safeguarded, but will not be held liable for inadvertent disclosure of the information. Statements of Qualifications marked “confidential” in their entirety will not be honored, and the Air District will not deny public disclosure of any portion of submittals so marked.

By submitting a statement of qualifications with portions marked “confidential,” a respondent represents it has a good faith belief that such portions are exempt from disclosure under the California Public Records Act and agrees to reimburse the District for, and to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the Air District, its officers, employees, and agents, from and against any and all claims, damages, losses, liabilities, suits, judgments, fines, penalties, costs, and expenses, including without limitation, attorneys’ fees, expenses, and court costs of any nature whatsoever, arising from or relating to the Air District’s non-disclosure of any such designated portions of a statement of qualifications.

7. Modification – Once submitted, submissions, including the composition of the contracting team, may be altered up until the deadline. Submissions may not be modified after the deadline.

C. Interviews

1. The Air District, at its option, may interview bidders. The interviews will be for the purpose of clarifying the submissions.
2. Submittal of new materials at an interview will not be permitted.
3. Interviews may involve a presentation and/or a question-and-answer session.
4. Interview teams should be representative of the project team.

SECTION V – SUBMISSION CONTENTS

A. Contents of Statement of Qualifications

Submitted statements of qualifications should follow the format outlined below and include all requested information. Failure to submit statements of qualifications in the required format may result in the submission being eliminated from evaluation and consideration.

1. Cover Page
 - a. Checklist – Complete Appendix A, Cover Page to select the services the firm is qualified to perform and/or that best align with their area of expertise.
2. Experience, Structure, Personnel
 - a. History – Provide an overview of your firm’s history, organization, and team. Include an overview of your firm, number of years in business, firm and ownership information.
 - b. Experience and Qualifications (Category or Categories of Services to be provided) – Describe your firm’s experience and qualifications in providing the selected services similar to those sought through this RFQ, including any services provided to governmental organizations. Describe capabilities in all areas relevant to the services sought through this RFQ and which the firm is qualified to provide. Include the number of years you have been providing such services.
 - c. Work Samples – Provide samples of up to five (5) major projects that the firm has completed in the areas sought through this RFQ. Include the client, the name of a contact person who is able to provide a reference, a description of the nature of the work, and the size and complexity of the project. Work samples should highlight relevant work performed in the Bay Area region and/or with governmental organizations when possible.
 - d. Subcontractors – List any subcontractors that may be used and the type or specialization of work to be performed by them.
 - e. Conflict of Interest – Address possible conflicts of interest or appearance of impropriety regarding other clients that could be created by providing services to the Air District. Describe procedures to be followed to detect and resolve any conflict of interest or appearance of impropriety. The Air District reserves the right to consider the nature and extent of such work in evaluating the statement of qualifications.
 - f. Self-Certification for Local Business or Green Business - If applicable, include a statement self-certifying that your firm qualifies as a local business and/or certified green business. “Local business” means that a firm’s headquarters is located within the nine counties of the Air District’s jurisdiction. A green business must be certified by a government agency or independent private rating organization.
 - g. Retention of Working Papers – All working papers are the property of the Air District. Include a statement acknowledging that if your firm is awarded the contract, you will retain project related papers and related reports for a minimum of five (5) years.
 - h. Additional Information – Provide other essential data that may assist in the

evaluation of the statement of qualifications.

3. Assigned Personnel and Fee Information

- a. Assigned Personnel – List all key personnel who would be assigned to Air District projects by name and role. Provide descriptions of education and training, along with a summary of experience in providing services similar to those sought through this RFQ. Background descriptions can be a resume, curriculum vitae (CV), or summary sheet. Note that the standard Air District contract will not permit substitution of project manager or staff without prior written approval of the Air District’s assigned program manager.
- b. Fee Information – Provide fee information and any percentage increases, if any, anticipated during the five year term of the agreement.
 - i. List the fully-burdened hourly rate of each principal and staff member whose resume is provided or whose job category may be required, and the rate that would be charged to the Air District.
 - ii. A list of anticipated reimbursable expenses, such as, expenses for presentation materials, translation and interpretation, virtual platforms, supplies, deliveries, B/W and color printouts and copies, faxes, photo scans and travel, copywriting and copyediting services and the rate charged for each.
 - iii. Any reduced fees offered to other municipalities, governmental entities, economic development or nonprofit organizations, and civic organizations.
 - iv. Any other fees or charges.

SECTION VI – QUALIFICATION EVALUATION

A panel of Air District staff will evaluate all statements of qualifications. The panel will recommend the selection of one or more firms to the Air Pollution Control Officer (APCO). The Air District Board of Directors may need to approve the contract(s) to carry out the work described in this RFQ. An example of a typical contract for professional services used by the Air District is included in Section VII.

In evaluating statements of qualifications submitted pursuant to this RFQ, the Air District places high value on the following factors, not necessarily in order of importance:

- Statement of Qualifications conforms to all requirements and is submitted in the format as noted in the RFQ.
- Approaches in methodology with respect to the anticipated scope of services that demonstrate maximum comprehension of and ability to provide such services to the Air District.
- Experience of firm and employees to be assigned to an Air District project in general, and in particular, providing similar services to governmental agencies.

- Quality and diversity of work product as demonstrated through submitted work samples.
- Demonstrated knowledge of Air District activities.
- Experience of the firm with comparable organizations and types of services.
- Innovative or outstanding work by firm that demonstrates the firm's unique, creative qualifications to provide the services outlined in this RFQ.
- Number, complexity, and nature of similar projects handled by the firm.
- Firm's staff ability and availability for working with Air District directors, officers, staff and consultants outside of standard working hours.
- Proposed fee structure relating to services the firm would provide.
- References of the firm.
- Local business or certified green business.*

*The Air District gives preferences to local businesses and those that are certified as green businesses by a government agency or independent private rating organization. "Local business" means that a firm's headquarters is located within the nine counties of the Air District's jurisdiction. Bidder must include a statement in their submission self-certifying that the bidder qualifies as a local business and/or certified green business to receive points for this criteria.

If two or more submissions receive the same number of points, the Air District will qualify lower cost offer.

SECTION VII – RFQ SCHEDULE

MILESTONE	DATE
RFQ RELEASE DATE	July 19, 2024
WRITTEN QUESTIONS DUE	August 8, 2024
ANSWERS POSTED ON PORTAL	August 15, 2024
SUBMISSION DEADLINE	August 22, 2024
SELECTION OF FINALIST(S)*	October 3, 2024
COMMENCEMENT OF CONTRACT*	November 1, 2024

*Dates are tentative and subject to change.

SECTION VIII – SAMPLE CONTRACT

A sample contract to carry out the work described in this RFQ is available on the Air District's website at <http://www.baaqmd.gov/about-the-air-district/request-for-proposals-rfp-rfq/samples-previous>. (Click the + to the left of Sample Contracts, and then click on the Master Services Contract link)

APPENDIX A – COVER PAGE

Contact Information

Name of Business/Organization	
Organization Address	
Project Manager Name	
Project Manager E-mail	
Project Manager Phone Number	
RFQ Designated Contact Information <i>(If different from Project Manager)</i>	

Service Category Selection

Respondents may choose to provide services for one or more of the Service Categories listed below.

1. Select/check the Service Category that best aligns with your firm's expertise.
2. Select/check the services that your firm can provide for each selected Service Category.

Service Category A: Preparation of Project-Level CEQA Documents

<input type="checkbox"/>	a. Consultation and analysis regarding level of CEQA review and documentation required for a project
<input type="checkbox"/>	b. Preparation of initial studies, negative declarations, environmental impact reports, or other CEQA documents for Air District rulemaking projects
<input type="checkbox"/>	c. Preparation of initial studies, negative declarations, environmental impact reports, or other CEQA documents for Air District permitting projects
<input type="checkbox"/>	d. Preparation of initial studies, negative declarations, environmental impact reports, or other project level CEQA documents

Service Category B: Preparation of Plan-Level CEQA Documents

<input type="checkbox"/>	a. Consultation and analysis regarding level of CEQA review and documentation required for a plan-level project
<input type="checkbox"/>	b. Preparation of initial studies, negative declarations, environmental impact reports, or other CEQA documents for Clean Air Plans, Attainment Plans, or AB 617 Community Emission Reduction Plans (to the extent they are not exempt from CEQA)
<input type="checkbox"/>	c. Preparation of initial studies, negative declarations, environmental impact reports, or other CEQA documents for other air quality plans and plan-level projects

Service Category C: Other CEQA Support Services

<input type="checkbox"/>	a. Assistance and development of CEQA air quality and greenhouse gas thresholds, CEQA guidelines and updates, and other CEQA tools
<input type="checkbox"/>	b. Assistance with conducting CEQA public meetings and workshops