



PRESENTED BY



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in partnership with



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DES MOINES METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION – PROPOSAL OUTLINE

The Des Moines Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) plays a crucial role for central Iowa, interconnecting critical partners and key stakeholders to provide comprehensive transportation planning, and driving innovation. This leadership and planning expertise ensures our communities remain ranked the best in the nation, maximizing workforce, economic development, and quality of life helping communities thrive. Currently, the Executive Director role at the MPO is open and as such, the MPO has requested assistance coordinating and leading the search to fill this key role.

In order to support the MPO and staff with this effort, the following scope of work has been prepared and submitted by 2 THE TOP in partnership with Deibler & Company, specifically the professional expertise of Cassandra Halls and Diana Deibler.

ABOUT THE FIRMS:



Cassandra Halls founded 2 THE TOP in 2007 offering a wide variety of business consulting services to corporate, non-profit, government, colleges, and universities. Areas of specialty include strategic planning, project management, research services, training facilitation, workforce development including executive recruitment, succession planning and operations process improvements. Halls spent 10 years of her career in public administration in Iowa, managing two cities and serving as CFO/City Clerk for a third. Halls has also served in the Vice President role in both nonprofit and corporate operations. Halls utilizes her broad perspective to drive solutions to the challenges encountered in many work cultures and environments. **2 THE TOP is a certified Iowa Targeted Small Business.**

To learn more about 2 THE TOP visit: www.2ttop.com or call (515) 473-4980.



Diana Deibler is a business strategist and communications consultant whose clients — companies, agencies, and nonprofits — turn to her when the stakes are especially high. She launched Deibler & Company as a firm 20+ years ago following successful careers in journalism, public relations, marketing, and sales management. Diana serves as an advisor to several regional leaders and has a reputation for being able to quickly assess and advise on even the most challenging and complex situations. Some of this work has included providing guidance and support for the recruiting and hiring of key positions.

To learn more about Deibler & Company visit: www.DeiblerandCompany.com or call (515) 681-2317.

PROJECT PLAN

Soliciting Applications:

The RFP indicates the preference to pursue a regional search approach. In leveraging Google analytics to track success of methods leveraged in recent recruitment efforts we know the highest rate of success will come from a combination of efforts:

- Promotion of the role via press release, posting on the MPO website, and sharing as part of regular MPO communications
- Referrals to the role by committee members, staff and other stakeholders
- Sharing the announcement via email and leveraging professional networks (committee outreach and follow-up)
- Placement of the job posting in highly viewed industry communication platforms and other publications
- Placement of the job posting on social media networks, with LinkedIn being particularly strong

We will craft messages that can easily be forwarded by the committees and staff participating in promoting the role, making this effort seamless, and a small investment of time for a significant return. However, it will be important to tackle promoting the role as a team to maximize the response to the job posting. We will also welcome the collaborative involvement of the MPO's Public Affairs Manager who has a reputation for being a talented writer and copy editor.

Evaluating Candidates:

We will work with the Search Committee to establish benchmark criteria for assessing candidate qualifications for the role. We expect this will include, but is not limited to:

- Professional Experience
- Technical skills
- Education
- Certifications/Credentials

Each candidate meeting minimum qualifications will be offered an initial interview to further assess:

- Leadership philosophies
- Potential workplace culture fit/alignment
- Knowledge/assessment of MPO understanding
- Communication abilities

Following the initial interviews, a summary will be provided to the Search Committee of the top candidates for further consideration.

Timeline:

The RFP indicates the desire to complete the Executive search and hiring process in November and December 2023. All processes can be modified to accommodate the timeline proposed by the Search Committee, however best practices are noted below for ideal outcomes.

- Working with the Search Committee to prepare the job description, job posting and process planning: 2 weeks
- Accepting applications: 3 weeks
- Candidate Initial Interviews: 1 week
- Search Committee Application Review: 1 week
- Search Committee Candidate Interviews: 1-2 weeks
- Offer Negotiation: 1 week
- Candidate Acceptance/Currently Employer Notice Period: Up to 30 days

Please note that some of the processes noted above may overlap with each other. The timelines indicated measure the length of time required to complete the specific process but are not stacked or cumulative and should not be used to measure the length of total time needed to complete filling the position.

There are other key factors included in the proposed timeline that must be noted that may impact project outcomes such as the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. It is common for people (committee members, staff and job seekers alike) to take time off and travel during these weeks making scheduling difficult and delaying the ability for timely responses. It is not uncommon for publications to also be delayed during this time which may impact deadlines for applications as well.

Again, we are fully available during the holidays and are open to accommodating your preferences, but it is important to keep in mind it may impact the outcomes if others are not.

Scope of Work:

Step I: Project Launch

In order to be effective in filling the role of Executive Director with the right talent, it is imperative that the Policy Committee is highly engaged and supportive of the process from the very beginning while being led by the Search Committee. To achieve this, we recommend a few steps to capture input as part of the launch process and collaboratively shape the search process. It's been our experience that when we've been able to provide attention to this early, we can immediately address any concerns/questions that if left unaddressed may otherwise disrupt the process later on.

Action Steps will include:

1. Introductory meeting with the Search Committee
2. Electronic survey (5-10 questions) for the members of the Policy Committee to inform critical objectives, expectations and needs related to the Executive Director role and search process
3. One-on-one follow-up interviews with the members of the Search Committee (each interview will be no more than 30 minutes)
4. Electronic survey (5-10) questions for MPO staff
5. Begin the process of designing the Executive Director Search Schedule and advertising plan

Step 2: Research and Analysis - Review of the Updated Executive Director Job Description and Candidate Profile

Job seekers are incredibly savvy today and will ask many questions while vetting an organization. Prior to posting the position, the MPO must address details of the role, compensation and the benefit package in addition to setting the schedule for posting and filling the position.

Action Steps will include:

1. Review proposed job description and candidate profile, along with the process undertaken to prepare the updates, propose updates/modifications as needed
2. Determine salary range based on local and regional comparisons/practices
3. Determine benefit and incentive (if applicable) package components
4. Develop the job posting
5. Finalize search schedule, advertising plan and search process components
6. Meet with Search Committee to review research findings, finalize schedule and search process

Step 3: Initiate the Executive Director Search Process

Once the search schedule and supporting documentation is complete, the search process can immediately be put into motion. Once the job postings become active, our team will assess the candidates as resumes and cover letters are received.

Action Steps will include:

1. Activate job postings and accept candidate submissions
2. Engage with candidates, respond to questions, follow-up as needed until application deadline
3. Conduct candidate analysis
4. Complete initial candidate interviews and reference checks for finalist(s)
5. Meet with Search Committee to review the *Candidate Analysis and recommendations

***Candidate analysis will include:**

- Reviewing resumes for background, qualifications, and credentials
- Evaluating candidates for serious consideration by conducting background and reference checks
- Preparing a written summary of candidates with the most promising qualifications

Step 4: Candidate Selection

Following the presentation of the Candidate Analysis the Search Committee will likely want to meet with the top candidates for an in-person interview. While this process will be fully customized to the preferences of the Search Committee, the steps below are shared as common procedures for reference.

Action Steps:

1. Search Committee review of the Candidate Analysis, invitation of top 3 candidates for interviews
2. Engage staff in the interview process (for example, submit interview questions or create opportunities for introduction during in-person interview day.)
3. Develop interview questions, interview evaluation form and host in-person interviews (This would include coordinating candidates, location, scheduling, etc.)

4. Facilitate Search Committee discussion to prioritize candidates post interviews
5. Determine candidate for recommendation of Policy Committee approval
6. Work with Search Committee for follow-up communication to non-selected candidates

Facilitators' Assumptions:

- The MPO has sufficient budget (minimum \$3,000.00) available for placement of ads in various publications to promote the Executive Director position.
- The geography for the Executive Director search will be regional - focused on the Midwest, Iowa-based publications, as well as appropriate trade publications and select media.
- Search Committee members will be available for key decision making, input and needed meetings to maintain the ambitious schedule.
- Some meetings will likely be virtual, and others in-person, for efficiency in scheduling.
- Project contract will be held by 2 THE TOP on behalf of both project partners.

INVESTMENT

2 THE TOP respectfully submits a bid of **\$32,500.00 - \$44,000.00***. This includes all development work, project management and all items noted in the Project Plan and Scope of Work described above.

The scope of work proposed above has been designed based on initial understanding of the project scope. Additional activities may be added or removed as the project progresses. Each addition or deletion will be evaluated by the 2 THE TOP team and the MPO and managed with an agreed upon change order process. We recognize many aspects of the project may change and we will be appropriately flexible in working with the MPO to ensure project goals are achieved.

Please note: It is not anticipated that travel beyond the greater Des Moines metro will be required for this project, however if so, reimbursement (for airfare, hotel, mileage, and meals) will be expected at current, allowable IRS rates. Travel expenses will be approved prior to incurring.

TERMS OF PAYMENT

2 THE TOP will submit invoices for payment throughout the project, upon completion of each major milestone outlined in the scope of work. Payment of invoices submitted by 2 THE TOP shall constitute acknowledgment and confirmation by the MPO that 2 THE TOP has performed the services under this contract in a satisfactory manner in all respects through the date of each invoice. Remittance of invoices is expected within 30 days.

***OPTIONAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Employment Contract Negotiation: \$2,000.00

- Draft the employment offer letter
- Assist the MPO and the candidate in coming to agreement on employment terms

While not included in the RFP, we strongly recommend including 2 THE TOP as an informed and neutral party to assist with creating the employment offer and negotiating terms for successful acceptance. The MPO will be extending an offering that is both within parameters set by the MPO and aligned with the candidate's expectations. It has been our experience that we gain candidate insights during the process that are very valuable to this end and will be in the best position to coach the MPO as to what is needed to "close the deal."

Missteps we have seen without proper support can happen for a variety of reasons:

- The offer wasn't properly constructed taking into account market trends
- The offer is limited or built with comparisons drawn from personal experiences
- The directors didn't feel comfortable negotiating and when the initial offer wasn't accepted, they were offended, and as a result lost their top candidate

Negotiation is a routine part of the hiring process, and even in putting your best offer forward, candidates are sure to provide feedback or ask questions prior to accepting. Having a partner in this discussion will assist in ensuring this process is seamless, there are no surprises, and everyone is confident in and happy with the outcome.

Coordinated Media Tactics: \$2,000.00

- Draft press release to announce job posting for distribution
- Draft press release to announce hire for distribution
- Distribution can be made by 2 THE TOP team and/or MPO

This is another critically important part of the process. A compelling posting will be needed to attract the very best talent. Additionally, having a press release that can be both posted and forwarded to potential talent to gauge their interest without asking directly is a strategic tactic allowing for greater outreach. Together this provides the ancillary benefit of not only promoting this key leadership position, but also offsetting or preempting any information that may be found in a general online search.

The range indicated in the Investment section includes the addition of Optional Considerations. In the event you do not wish to proceed with the Optional Considerations, please subtract one or both of them from the total of the Investment submitted above to determine the total final cost.

All-Staff Salary Analysis: \$7,500.00

- Update job descriptions as needed ensuring the descriptions accurately reflect the duties of the and responsibilities of the role.
- Comprehensive staff salary analysis to ensure a transparent and equitable compensation structure.

This analysis will include an examination of current salary levels across all organizational roles, considering factors such as experience, qualifications, and job responsibilities. The goal is to identify any existing disparities and propose adjustments to align with industry standards and organizational objectives. Additionally, the analysis will take into account regional variations and economic factors to maintain competitiveness in the talent market. The findings will be presented in a detailed report.

ACCEPTANCE

With acceptance of this proposal 2 THE TOP will provide the services outlined above and agreed to by all parties. This document constitutes the contract for services. Acceptance applies only to selected project components indicated below:

(Please place an "X" in front of the project components you would like to include in the scope of work.)

_____ Core Scope of Work (Defined by Steps 1- 4) (\$32,500.00)

_____ Optional Consideration: Employment Contract Negotiation (\$2,000.00)

_____ Optional Consideration: Coordinated Media Tactics (\$2,000.00)

_____ Optional Consideration: All-staff Salary Analysis (\$7,500.00)

\$_____ Total Project Cost

Accepted by _____ on _____ 2023, as a representative of the Des Moines Area MPO.

Accepted by _____ on _____ 2023, as a representative of 2 THE TOP.