

**EASTGATE REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS  
AIR QUALITY PROGRAM**

FOR THE COUNTIES OF  
MAHONING AND TRUMBULL, OHIO

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL**

SUBMITTED BY  
EASTGATE REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

**100 East Federal Street, Suite 1000  
Youngstown, Ohio 44503**

**January 24, 2025**

# REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR AIR QUALITY FORECASTING

Issued: Friday, January 24, 2025

Deadline for Submittal: Friday, February 14, 2025

## **Overview**

The Eastgate Regional Council of Governments (Eastgate) is seeking an organization to provide daily ozone and PM2.5 forecasting for Mahoning and Trumbull Counties, Ohio. The contract is from April 1, 2025, to March 31, 2026, with two optional one-year extensions, which can be exercised by Eastgate carrying through March 31, 2028.

Eastgate created the Air Quality Advisory Day Program in 1999 as a proactive measure to address the air quality problems associated with increased levels of ozone and have now broadened the program to include PM2.5 forecasting. The Eastgate Regional Council of Governments Air Quality Program informs, educates, and alerts individuals, businesses and organizations of the voluntary actions that can be taken to reduce ground-level ozone and particle pollution. The Air Quality Program provides the public with information regarding the forecasted and monitored ozone and PM2.5 levels, real-time data, daily forecast notification, as well as educational information, in Mahoning and Trumbull Counties.

The agency currently works with local media to inform the public about the health risks associated with elevated levels of ozone and particle pollution and offers voluntary tips to reduce the effects of each and the heightened health risks for the elderly, children, and those with respiratory or heart conditions. Currently, daily air quality forecasts are provided to the media and interested participants via e-mail notification, which enables residents to plan their activities and minimize the health risks associated with ozone and PM2.5.

## **Scope of Services**

The basic program includes the following tasks:

1. Daily, year-round ozone and PM2.5 forecasting that should include:
  - a. Current and next day AQI value forecasts (ozone and PM2.5 from April to October and PM2.5 only from November through March)
  - b. Five-day AQI category outlook
  - c. An in-depth weather and air quality discussion
  - d. Dissemination of forecasts to local and national media outlets
  - e. Media stories and support
  - f. Monthly full-color AQI recap flyers
  - g. Seasonal air quality summary and forecast performance presentation
  - h. Forecasting firm shall also provide Eastgate staff the names and contact information for the staff member providing forecasting on weekend days. Weekend forecasting contact shall be available to Eastgate as needed.

2. Automatically submit the current and next-day ozone and PM2.5 forecasts to EPA's AIRNow web page and other media sources each day, including national sources.
3. Provide meteorological and air quality consulting to Eastgate staff and the media, as needed on an on-call basis, 7 days-a-week, 24 hours-a-day. Provide Eastgate with informative story ideas to keep the local media and public aware of meteorological events that may be causing elevated ozone levels in the region.
4. Develop creative and engaging content intended to educate the public on air quality topics and issues. Content should be created in a way that is easy to access and share.
5. Evaluate and validate the performance of the forecast equations and the overall-forecasting program using several verification statistics.
6. Prepare a report detailing the number of days the ozone standard is exceeded at the end of October (for ozone), and March (for PM2.5).
7. Prepare a report to summarize the development and details of the forecasting methods and forecast performance including accuracy rate, at the end of the contract.

### **The firm's response to the RFP shall include:**

#### Cover Letter

The proposal cover letter shall list the name of the project, name of the firm, and the name, email address, and telephone number of a contact person with authority to answer questions regarding the proposal. This letter shall include the name, address, and phone number of a contact person to be notified regarding contractual issues. A representative authorized to legally bind the firm shall sign the cover letter.

#### Executive Summary of the Response to the Proposal

This section shall provide a one-to-three-page summary of the firm's response and the service to be provided. The firm clearly specifies its commitment to meet the terms, conditions, and requirements as defined in the RFP, and to perform the work within the time frame and budget specified in the contract.

#### Consultant's Methodology/Work Plan

This section shall indicate the consultant's understanding of the project scope of work, a definition of the scope of the project (including a discussion of the tasks to be performed to accomplish the scope of work), a definition of the final product, and the consultant's approach to the project (including the completion date for key tasks, phase deliverables, the management organizational chart and identification of Eastgate's role in the project). Their approach will also demonstrate their ability to develop creative and engaging content intended to educate the public on air quality topics and issues. The consultant shall provide a statement regarding the project understanding and provide a description of the level of familiarity with Mahoning and Trumbull Counties, and the surrounding counties.

The consultant's proposal shall contain a step-by-step explanation and description of the methodology to be employed and how the methodology fits into Eastgate's scope of work. The consultant's proposal shall contain a preliminary work plan describing the anticipated workflow necessary to produce the deliverables

described in the scope of work section of this RFP. If subcontracts are utilized, the position in the project team and identity of the sub-consultant shall be stated.

Also, administrative information such as the contractor's status reporting procedures and the consultant's approach to effective communication with Eastgate personnel shall be included.

### Samples of Similar Work

The consultant should identify similar projects undertaken by their firms. Document actual responsibility on the project. Provide appropriate reference(s), name(s), and contact information. This section should provide evidence of experience in ozone and PM2.5 forecasting and working with ozone and air quality programs focused on public outreach, education, and media relations.

### Deliverables

The consultant's proposal shall list and describe the deliverables and schedules for base services that are part of the various steps of the methodology. Benefits and ownership of each deliverable shall be described. It is anticipated that any information or material developed by the consultant or sub-consultants for use in this study will become the property of Eastgate, which will make it available to other public agencies in Ohio.

### Project Schedule

We propose the following schedule:

#### **Project Year 1**

April 1, 2025:	Contract starts; begin daily ozone and PM2.5 forecasting
October 31, 2025:	End ozone forecasting; forecasting of PM2.5 through March 31, 2026
March 2026:	Eastgate provides notification regarding second year contract extension; If extended the dates under "Project Year 2" will apply
March 31, 2026:	End PM2.5 forecasting
April 2026:	Detailed report on forecast performance

#### **Project Year 2 (optional)**

April 1, 2026:	Contract starts; begin daily ozone and PM2.5 forecasting
October 31, 2026:	End ozone forecasting; forecasting of PM2.5 through March 31, 2027
March 2027:	Eastgate provides notification regarding third year contract extension; If extended the dates under "Project Year 3" will apply
March 31, 2027:	End PM2.5 forecasting

April 2027: Detailed report on forecast performance

**Project Year 3 (optional)**

April 1, 2027: Contract starts; begin daily ozone and PM2.5 forecasting

October 31, 2027: End ozone forecasting; forecasting of PM2.5 through March 31, 2028

March 31, 2028: End PM2.5 forecasting, detailed report on forecast performance; Contract ends

Personnel Profile

Include as part of your proposal a statement concerning the recent related experience of persons from the consultant's firm who will be actively engaged in the proposed effort. Emphasis should be placed on experience directly applicable to the project requirement, as well as certification of each person actively engaged in the proposed effort. Detailed resumes should also be included.

Costs

The proposal must identify separately the costs for the initial contract period of April 1, 2025 – March 31, 2026, and each of the two optional one-year extensions. Costs for the initial contract period should not exceed \$84,000. Costs for successive years should not increase by more than 3 percent each year. Include in the proposal all costs, including labor billing costs, other direct costs, and overhead, etc. Costs for products that address materials valuable to the goals of Eastgate's Air Quality program that may not have been identified in the scope of work may be included in the proposal and classified as an optional available service.

**Evaluation Criteria**

The proposal will be evaluated using the following criteria:

1. Knowledge and experience in developing and delivering ozone and PM2.5 forecasting programs, and familiarity with Eastgate's Air Quality Program
2. Availability of full-time air quality meteorologists, as well as availability of Certified Consulting Meteorologists (CCMs)
3. Total cost and anticipated number of hours to complete work
4. Scope of work

**Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs)**

Eastgate encourages qualified disadvantaged business enterprises, including minority-owned businesses and women-owned businesses, to submit proposals.

## **Questions**

If there are questions regarding the RFP, please submit in writing by Friday, January 31, 2025, to Tricia D'Avignon at [tdavignon@eastgatecog.org](mailto:tdavignon@eastgatecog.org). Questions and their responses will be posted on the News section of Eastgate's Website within the corresponding post about the Air Quality RFP by Friday, February 7, 2025.

## **Submissions**

Firms interested in being considered for selection must respond by submitting their proposal via email by 2 p.m. EDT on Friday, February 14, 2025. Proposal submissions should be in .pdf format.

Proposals should be emailed to the appropriate Eastgate staff member, listed below, prior to the above-mentioned due date and time.

Email proposals to:

Tricia D'Avignon  
Regional Planner  
Eastgate Regional Council of Governments  
[tdavignon@eastgatecog.org](mailto:tdavignon@eastgatecog.org)

Eastgate will serve as the project manager. Eastgate shall not be liable for any cost incurred by the consultants in response to this RFP, or any cost incurred in connection with any discussions, correspondence or attendance at interviews or negotiation sessions.

Eastgate reserves the right to reject any or all offers and continue the RFP process without obligation or liability to any potential bidders, to accept a proposal other than the lowest price offer, and to award contract on the basis of initial offers received.

Eastgate thanks you for taking the time to review and respond to this RFP.