

# Arrowhead Regional Development Commission



## ENERGY ACTION PLAN DEVELOPMENT *REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)*

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Release Date: February 19, 2010

### RFP ANNOUNCEMENT:

The Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (ARDC) is seeking to work with a mixed local government / community group in northeast Minnesota to develop an Energy Action Plan. This pilot project will result in incorporating energy planning into an existing Comprehensive Plan or one that is undergoing new development. The planning process will be documented and available for case study by other Minnesota communities. Township, city, county and Indian tribe local governments in northeast Minnesota are invited to respond to the following RFP with a proposal if they wish to be considered for participation in this project.

### OVERVIEW:

During 2010, ARDC will work with one local unit of government / community group in NE MN who is ready and willing to develop an Energy Action Plan, resulting in an officially adopted addendum to an existing Comprehensive Plan (or to be incorporated into one that is in progress). The Energy Action Plan will identify goals, strategies, and implementation action steps for energy conservation / energy efficiency / or renewable energy projects in the community.

Unfortunately, many local energy initiatives are not part of a Comprehensive Plan. These projects are often taken on by groups not directly affiliated with a local government, but many energy initiatives eventually must be reviewed by a local government before they can be implemented. This review can be in the form of zoning requests, building code/permit needs, or funding requests, among other reasons. If local governments are not a part of the energy project planning process and are not prepared for these requests, this can lead to a stagnation of the project.

To address this issue, ARDC recommends that energy becomes a standard section of a local government's official Comprehensive Plan. By discussing energy initiatives at the Comprehensive Plan level, communities will be better prepared to assist in the implementation of energy projects, even if those projects are proposed by groups not associated with local government. Once a group has established an Energy Action Plan, they will be well-positioned to strategically move forward with planning for and pursuing funding opportunities and developing zoning ordinances that address energy initiatives / energy-related economic development in the community.

ARDC is well-recognized in its expertise and experience in helping communities strategically develop comprehensive planning documents. The ARDC planning process is community-based in nature, designed to directly engage a diverse group of community representatives, including local residents, local government officials, local businesses, and other related stakeholders.

#### **ENERGY ACTION PLAN PROCESS & LOCAL COMMITMENT:**

The energy planning process is expected to take up to six months from start to finish. ARDC will facilitate 3-4 public meetings to identify goals, strategies, and implementation action steps for energy conservation / energy efficiency / or renewable energy projects in the community. Commitment by a local core committee is a requirement for participation in this pilot project. Committee members will be responsible for local organizing, local meeting logistics, and to act as active participants in each of the development and review stages of plan development from start to finish. Committee participation throughout the planning process is required as an in-kind financial contribution to the project.

#### **RFP APPLICATION PROCESS:**

##### **Step One: Application**

The RFP must be submitted by a local government representative or local community resident with the approval the local government. Applicants are required to submit the following materials, including attachments as noted:

1. **1-2 page Cover Letter.** The letter should include reason(s) for interest in the Energy Action Plan project, information on current or past energy initiatives in the community, the date of adoption on the existing Comprehensive Plan, or the community's plans for developing a new Comprehensive Plan, or a statement describing how the community is currently undergoing a Comprehensive Plan update.
2. **List of Local Energy Action Plan Core Committee Members.** Please include the name, title (work, resident, and/or group affiliation) of the potential Core Committee members. The committee must include a mixed representation of local government and local resident/business/energy stakeholder members.
3. **Local Government Resolution.** The application must include a resolution from the local government that demonstrates the City Council, Township Board, County Board, or Tribal Council's support of the application. The resolution should express a commitment to work collaboratively with a diverse group of stakeholders throughout the process and an understanding that participation in this project will conclude with formal adoption of the plan by the City, Township, County, or Tribe.

4. **Letter(s) of Support.** Letters of support should be submitted by any local community group representative involved in the process (i.e., a local environmental or energy related community non-profit or organized grassroots group). Letters should express a commitment to work collaboratively with a diverse group of stakeholders throughout the process.

#### **Step Two: Interviews**

ARDC will contact the RFP respondents who are considered to be the most prepared, committed and ready to successfully complete this pilot project. Interviews will be conducted either by phone or in person and will be used to ask clarifying questions of the core committee.

#### **Step Three: RFP Award and Timeline**

ARDC expects to award the Energy Action Plan project to a community in late April, 2010. Work will commence in early May, 2010 and must conclude no later than November 30, 2010.

#### **RFP DUE DATE:**

Proposals must be received by **Thursday, April 1<sup>st</sup> 4:30pm.** Applications must be delivered either via email, mail, or fax to:

Bonnie Hundrieser  
Arrowhead Regional Development Commission  
221 West First Street  
Duluth, MN 55802  
Phone: (218) 529-7527  
Fax: (218) 529-7592  
Email: [bhundrieser@ardc.org](mailto:bhundrieser@ardc.org)

Please contact Bonnie Hundrieser by phone or email to discuss any questions prior to the application deadline.

*The Arrowhead Regional Development Commission will provide up to \$10,000 in planning services in working with the selected community. Funding for this pilot project is provided in part by the Northeast Minnesota Clean Energy Resource Team (CERT), the Rural Energy Development Initiative (REDI)-a program administered by the Southwest Initiative Foundation, and Iron Range Resources.*