



CITY OF EAST PROVIDENCE

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OFFICE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

RFP EP23/24-15 SPECIFICATIONS

FIVE YEAR CONSOLIDATED PLAN & ONE YEAR ANNUAL ACTION PLAN BID OPENING WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20, 2024 AT 11:00AM

The City of East Providence Community Development Office (CD Office) is requesting proposals from qualified firms ("Consultants") to undertake the development of the City of East Providence's PY 2024-2029 Five-Year Consolidated Plan and PY 2024 one year Annual Action Plan. Drafts of both plans must be submitted to the CD Office no later than May 30, 2024 by 4:00 pm. The Consolidated Plan ("Con Plan") and Annual Action Plan ("Annual Plan") shall encompass the Community Development Block Grant ("CDBG"), and fulfill HUD regulatory requirements regarding the receipt and potential receipt of HUD CDBG funds. The City of East Providence is an entitlement City which receives approximately \$730,000 dollars in CDBG funding annually.

The CD Office is required to submit an 5-year Consolidated Community Development Plan to the Department of Housing and Urban Development according to Federal Regulation 24 CFR 570.200 and 24 CFR Part 91. Included as a requirement to the Consolidated Plan, an Annual Action Plan for the program year July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025, must be completed and submitted simultaneously. The City desires to hire a qualified consultant to undertake these two tasks that meet all requirements of the Federal Regulation.

I. Description of the Project:

The Con Plan combines the planning and application requirements of certain Federal Regulations (24 CFR 570.200 and 24 CFR Part 91) and includes but is not limited to a Needs Assessment and Market Analysis outlining levels of relative need in the areas of affordable housing, homelessness, special needs, economic development and community development including but not limited to resiliency, sustainability, and access to broadband. The consultant will be expected to gather the information through a number of methods, including consultation with City administration, state and local agencies, non-profit organizations, public outreach consisting of surveys, focus groups, etc., a review of demographic and economic data sets, and a housing market analysis. The Needs Assessment forms the basis of the Strategic Plan that will detail how the City of East Providence will address its priority needs over the next 5 years. The Consolidated planning process serves as the framework for a community-wide dialogue to

identify housing and community development priorities that align and focus funding from the CDBG program.

The period of this Con Plan is July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2029 and the period of the Annual Action Plan is July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2029. The Con Plan and Annual Plan must meet all requirements of the Federal regulations (24 CFR 570.200 and 24 CFR Part 91) and must follow the HUD guidance for the e-Con Planning Suite. Because of the short timetable for accomplishing this project, as well as the diversity of the individuals participating in the planning process, the Consultant should have extensive experience in the following areas; written & oral communication skills, group facilitation, team building, and time management.

A draft copy of the 5-year Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan must be available for public comment no later than May 30, 2024. The final copy of the plan will be submitted to HUD after the end of a 30 day comment period of the draft plans approximately on July 5, 2024.

The selected Consultant will lead the Consolidated Planning effort and may have limited assistance by the CD Office staff for the timely completion of the Con Plan & Annual Plan. The Consultant will have overall responsibility for completing all aspects of the Plans. Accordingly, the Consultant must be knowledgeable of the HUD Con Plan requirements and e Con Planning Suite and must have demonstrated capacity to perform the tasks necessary to complete the project. The Consultant, with City oversight and review, will be primarily responsible for work related to project management, preparation of the required documents, citizen participation, and drafting of the Con Plan and Annual Action Plans. Con Plan requirements are detailed specifically in 24 CFR 91, as amended.

City staff (and local community organizations) may be available to provide assistance for work related to citizen participation. However, it should be understood that the City has limited staff availability to support the project and will rely on the personnel, experience, and expertise of the Consultant to ensure all necessary components of the process and plans are completed in a timely manner.

This RFP is written with the expectation that the Consultant will have the capacity to exercise independent judgment and will be able to perform those actions necessary to achieve the project's objectives. While the Consultant will be working under the direction of the CD Office Director, it should be understood that the consultant will be required to perform much of the project by relying heavily on their own personal experience and knowledge to ensure all necessary components of the project are properly completed.

II. Scope of Services & Key Components of the Con Plan:

The following items focus on specific portions of the Con Plan. Proposals submitted for consideration should describe in detail any additional data, resources, analysis, consultants, etc., recommended for inclusion in the planning effort. In using the HUD's e Con planning suite format in preparing the plans, some information and data will be prepopulated or otherwise be provided within the format. Other data will need to be acquired and developed in order to satisfy HUD's regulatory requirements.

- Executive Summary

The Consultant will be responsible for preparing an Executive Summary. The Executive Summary should include a brief summary of the citizen participation process, community profile, housing and community development needs, goals, and strategies.

- Consultation / Coordination

The CD Office will be available to assist the Consultant in soliciting required input from other public agencies and jurisdictions (e.g., Housing Authority of the City of East Providence, other city departments, the East Providence Health Equity Zone, various Social Service Agencies, etc.). A portion of the information may be obtained in the form of needs assessments and/or planning documents (e.g., Public Housing Plans, the city's Comprehensive Plan, etc.). The Consultant will be required to obtain any additional data needed and will be responsible for the consultation and coordination process as well as analyzing, summarizing, and incorporating the information obtained into the Con Plan.

- Institutional Structure

The CD Office staff will work with the Consultant to summarize the institutional structure through which the Con Plan will be implemented, including non-profit organizations, and public institutions. The Consultant will assist the CD Office staff in identifying gaps in the existing system. The Consultant will be responsible for summarizing and incorporating the information obtained into the Con Plan as required by HUD regulations.

- Homeless Needs, Priorities and Strategies

Information on the homeless needs, facilities, and services is available through the East Bay Coalition for the Homeless and the State of Rhode Island Consolidated Homeless Fund and other relative agencies. The Consultant will be required to review these documents and incorporate the information and strategies into the Con Plan as appropriate. Additional consultations with the various Health & Human Service, Social Service, Mental Health, and other agencies may be required.

- Housing Needs, Priorities and Strategies

The housing market analysis must reflect the current housing conditions, including housing pricing, rents, vacancies, and construction costs relevant to the City of East Providence. The Consultant will be required to obtain and analyze housing market data and prepare an updated housing market analysis. This discussion must incorporate affordable housing issues and needs for various income groups. The results of the analysis must be considered in view of the housing strategies and development of new or revised strategies and objectives for the Con Plan.

- Public Housing Needs/ Strategies

HUD regulations require the inclusion of public housing needs and strategies in the Con Plan. The Consultant will be required to work with the East Providence Housing Authority to ensure that the information from the Public Housing Plan is incorporated into the respective Con Plan.

- **Lead Based Paint**

Information on the age of housing (available from the U.S. census) is generally used to identify potential lead based paint problems. Additional information concerning reported cases of children with elevated blood levels indicating lead based paint poisoning is available from the Rhode Island Department of Public Health. The Consultant will be responsible for analyzing data from Rhode Island Department of Public Health and U.S census for incorporation into the Con Plan as appropriate.

- **Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choices**

Please be advised, the update to the City's Analysis of Impediment to Fair Housing Choices is NOT included in this RFP. The City has participated in a Regional Analysis of Impediments sponsored by the State of Rhode Island's Office of Housing & Community Development. Reference to Fair Housing and the Analysis of Impediments should be included in the Con Plan by the Consultant were appropriate.

III. Citizens Participation:

As a part of the response to this RFP, and in accordance with 21 CFR Part 91.100 and 91.105, the City is requiring the Consultant to identify and execute a process to encourage significant participation from City residents and businesses including the following:

- Low- and moderate-income persons, particularly those living in blighted areas and in areas where CDBG funds are proposed to be used, and by residents of predominantly low-and moderate- income neighborhoods;
- Minorities and non-English speaking persons and persons with disabilities; and
- Residents of public and assisted housing developments.

In addition to the above, the Consultant will also be required to engage local and regional institutions and other organizations in the process of developing and implementing the Con Plan. The City is encouraging respondents to this proposal to identify traditional and nontraditional public involvement techniques.

IV. Scope of Work:

The specific requirements for the Consolidated Plan can be found in the Code of Federal Regulations, 24 CFR Part 91 - PART 91 Consolidated Submissions for Community Planning and Development Programs, in particular Subparts A, B, C, and F.

Specific tasks must include, at a minimum:

- A. Organizational

1. Meet with the CD Office and relevant stakeholders
2. Prepare a timeline for project milestones including proposed community and stakeholder meetings and stakeholder interviews. This timeline will be made available to the public to explain the process.

B. Needs Assessment

The Consultant must gather factual and broad community input through citizen and stakeholder participation and data collection including:

1. Review of available data, reports and documents (2020-2024 Consolidated Plan, Annual Plan, CAPER reports, and the current draft Comprehensive Plan.
2. Review of current HUD Consolidated Plan regulations and guidance, particularly changes made since 2020.
3. Presentations at community and public meetings and moderating discussions (including preparing and copying) to gather community input on the community needs. This will include:
 - a. An initial evening public meeting to explain the Consolidated Plan process and present the timeline;
 - b. Up to four weekday evening or Saturday daytime neighborhood meetings;
 - c. Up to six on-site focus group meetings to meet with program clients at community agencies during their regularly scheduled program times; and
 - d. Interviews and/or daytime focus group meetings with community stakeholders, to be determined with CD Office staff and Consultant but at a minimum should include representatives from City departments, the Mayor's office, City Council representatives, business community, housing agencies, social service agencies, state agencies, regional agencies, CHDO representatives, corporate and community foundations and other organizations or individuals deemed appropriate.
4. Prepare summary of comments, conduct analysis and assess data gathered and develop 5 year priority recommendations incorporating factual data and public input collected to support those recommendations.
5. Using data and information collected to develop written Needs Assessment and Market Analysis in format required by HUD.
6. Develop maps of key data elements such as income, housing, and racial characteristics.
7. Adjust Needs Assessment and Market analysis from the HUD e Con Planning submission document to one suitable for public distribution and comment.

C. Strategic Assessment

1. Through stakeholder meeting and interviews with Administration and CD Office staff, state and local agencies and corporate and community foundations, identify Funding Opportunity areas the City could consider investing CDBG funds in. Funding Opportunity areas are program capacities or partnerships that could be developed or enhanced by City departments and/or community agencies to more effectively compete for federal, state and private foundation grant funding opportunities.

2. Through stakeholder meetings and interviews determine what strategies CD Office staff should fund or pursue to assist CDBG funded community agencies to more effectively deliver services to East Providence residents. Strategies could include: capacity building assistance to agencies, agencies adopting stronger performance measures, or greater transparency of agency program outcomes, etc.

D. Preparation of 5 Year Consolidated Plan & Year One Annual Action Plan

3. Develop a draft PY 2024-2029 Five-Year Consolidated Plan using the HUD e Con Planning tool that includes 5- year funding goals, priorities and strategies, along with proposed accomplishments and performance measurements.
4. Develop a draft PY 2024 Annual Action Plan that includes proposed activities, proposed accomplishments and performance measurements using the IDIS/e Con Planning Suite that is based on a draft 5 Year 2024-2029 Consolidated Plan.
5. Include all required narrative, tables and maps needed to comply with 24 CFR Part 91.
6. Provide one-and five-year budgets subject to City review for applying available resources to the needs identified and incorporated into the Plans.
7. Provide internal copies of Plan sections to CD Office staff for review and comment and provide a complete draft Con Plan and Annual Action Plan for its final review before drafts of the Plans are made public.
8. The draft plan for the public must be in a Word Document that is concise, useable, and easily readable by the public. It is our understanding the e Con Planning Suite version, while meeting the HUD submission requirements, may not be the best document to display or print for public review.

V. **Project/Product Deliverables:**

The consultant is expected to prepare a draft version of the Con Plan and Annual Plan for the CD Office using the e Con Planning Suite format. Working in conjunction with CD Office staff, the consultant will be required to download both draft plans and produce a hard copy of each that will be available for review by the general public as part of a mandatory 30-day comment period. At the conclusion of the comment period, the consultant must prepare a final version of the plans that is ready for the City's official submission to HUD. At a minimum, the Con Plan/Action Plan must contain all the information requested in this RFP and must meet the requirements set forth by HUD. It should also be noted that a final negotiated payment for the work associated with this project will be held until such time as HUD approves all of the plans.

The consultant will be responsible for preparing in final form all forms and tables in the e Con Planning Suite for the City review and submit to HUD. The Consultant will be responsible for making any revisions required by HUD after submission.

The Consultant is responsible for submitting two (2) color copies each of the approved Con Plan and Annual Plan, one (1) in 3-ring binders or accepted alternative and one (1) unbound and reproducible master hard copy of each document, including maps, charts, graphs, supporting tables, and one (1) digital copy no later than July 30, 2024.

The Consultant is also responsible for submitting digital copies of each, in Microsoft Word and Adobe PDF, the final Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan.

The Consultant will submit a reproducible copy of all maps, graphics, slide presentations, photographs, surveys, and public comments made during citizen and agency engagement and to CD Office.

All deliverables will become property of the City of East Providence.

VI. Procedure for Consultant Selection:

In securing professional services, it is the primary goal of the Office of Housing & Community Development to hire a consultant on the basis of demonstrated competence and qualifications for the services described in this RFP at a fair and reasonable price. It should be recognized that the amount of fee alone will not be the only criteria for selecting these professional services, knowledge of and experience with CDBG /HUD Programs is also a very important criteria that will be evaluated as part of this RFP.

VII. Factor for Award

The contract will be awarded to the respondent best satisfying the overall requirements of the RFP, but not necessarily quoting the lowest rate. The contract proposals will be rated based upon an evaluation scale, with the highest rating being 125 points. The factors by which the proposals will be evaluated are as follows:

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| Technical Approach/Understanding of the project | 25 pts. |
| Work Management Plan | 15 pts. |
| Corporate Experience | 10 pts. |
| Experience of Proposed Personnel | 20 pts. |
| Experience in Housing and Community Development Planning | 25 pts. |
| Cost | 35 pts. |
| Total | 125 pts. |

The City of East Providence reserves the right to award the total proposal as submitted, to award or eliminate certain individual task (s) / item (s) in the proposal and/or reject any and all proposals for services.

VIII. Consultant Qualifications and Requirements:

Copies of the Consultant's submitted proposal must include the following:

1. A transmittal letter, signed by a person authorized to commit the firm legally.

2. A summary of the scope of work should be written with sufficient detail to demonstrate that the consultant possesses the experience, knowledge and skill to lead the Consolidated Plan & Annual Action Plan preparation process.
3. Work plan, including an itemized timeline projecting key project bench marks, individual responsibilities and work products.
4. Statement of the consultant's intended approach and methodology for the proposed scope of work, including delineation of specific approach to the tasks undertaken.
5. Experience of the firm in the field of Housing and Community Development Planning, including a history and profile of the firm with resumes and credentials of key personnel who will be responsible for this project.
6. Evidence of the firm's ability to work with many diverse organizations/agencies to build consensus.
7. Samples of past work products and a list of references with names, addresses and telephone numbers.
8. Description of the management plan to include; a detailed project schedule showing an understanding of the project time line.
9. Description of the firm's current workload.
10. Detailed cost breakdown containing an itemization by task as well as a total cost estimate. (All reimbursable items for this project must be included in total cost.)

Additional information may be submitted that further emphasizes the firm's ability to provide consulting services.

IX. Questions Regarding RFP:

If you have any further questions regarding submission requirements please contact: David Bachrach, CD Office Director.

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