

**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS
FOR THE CITY OF COLUMBIA SOUTH CAROLINA**



The City of Columbia, South Carolina is seeking a qualified consulting firm with experienced principal staff to update the Five-Year Consolidated Plan, Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice, and Annual Action Plan. The update is required as part of the City's participation in the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) Program and Housing Opportunity for Persons With Aids (HOPWA). The Plan is for the period July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2014.

I. BACKGROUND

The City of Columbia has been an Urban Entitlement for CDBG Program since July 1, 1975 and became a Participating Jurisdiction in the HOME Program on July 1, 1992. Also, we have administered the HOPWA program since 1999. The City's Five-Year Consolidated Plan will expire on July 1, 2010. The City intends to use the updated Five-Year Consolidated Planning process to further economic growth and community revitalization. The upcoming Consolidated Planning process will produce a document to direct expenditure of HUD funds, and to provide a framework for a five-year plan for community development.

The City of Columbia is located in the Midlands Region of South Carolina and is a part of the Columbia, SC Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). The economy is balanced between significant governmental entities, high-tech industries, higher education, regional retail centers, military facilities and a growing retirement destination. The 2000 census reports a total City population of approximately 120,000 making it the largest City in South Carolina.

II. SCOPE OF WORK

The consultant will collaborate with the City of Columbia's Department of Community Development in the identification, development, scheduling and implementation of activities designed to complete a HUD acceptable Consolidated Plan.

Scope of work includes but is not limited to the following:

- Update 2005-2009 Consolidated Plan data and demographics in accordance with HUD regulations to include:
 - Design and implementation of a Citizen Participation Plan and Process
 - Community Profile
 - Housing and Homeless Needs Assessment
 - Housing Market Analysis
 - Strategy to Alleviate Chronic Homelessness
 - Special Population Needs
 - Public and Assisted Housing Needs
 - Lead Paint Hazard Reduction Strategy
 - Community Development Needs
 - housing
 - neighborhood development
 - economic development
 - Conduct no less than (4) community meetings
 - Conduct presentations all public hearings
 - Develop and circulate one (1) community survey
 - Five-Year Strategic Community Development Plan
 - Area-targeted Implementation Plan
 - Program Year 2010 Annual Action Plan
 - Complete other additional specific actions as required by HUD
- Consult with public and non-profit agencies that provide housing, health, economic development and social services, public representatives, and citizens.
- Identify updated priority needs and determine priorities, objectives and strategies and proposed accomplishments and outcomes for the next five years (2010 – 2014)
- Update the Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice (AI)

III. City of Columbia STAFF PARTICIPATION

The City of Columbia will expect the consultant to have the capacity to perform those actions necessary to achieve the project objectives in a manner consistent with those expected by the City. While the consultant will be working under the general direction of the Community Development Department, it should be understood the City has limited professional staff capacity to support the project and will rely on the personnel, experience and expertise of the consultant to ensure all necessary components of the process are completed in a timely manner. The City can assist with meeting location/scheduling services.

The City will provide copies of all existing plans, data and documents including:

- Contact lists of local agencies, neighborhood organizations, special interest groups and others to be invited to participate in the process
- Copies of zoning, subdivision and related land use regulations
- 2005-09 Consolidated Plan and annual updates
- Current community development programs, policies and incentives, neighborhood support strategies, capital improvement plans, and related materials

IV. ANTICIPATED CONSULTANT SERVICE COMPONENTS

The consultant will be responsible for updating the 2010-2014 Consolidated Plan, Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice and Annual Action Plan in preparation for HUD. Because there are numerous components of the Consolidated Plan to schedule, including public meetings and meetings of the City Council, it is the intention of the City to meet with the consultant in **November/December 2009** to commence the study. An early task will be to develop a detailed calendar for completion of the work, which must meet the guidelines for completion including but not limited to:

- Meaningful involvement of citizens, community-based organizations, housing, and service providers in the planning process (including marketing to these groups)
- Regular consultation with the Community Development Department staff
- Facilitation of public presentations, meetings, and hearings as appropriate (submission of minutes will be required by consultant)
- Preparation of Five-Year Consolidated Plan (including strategies for community development, housing and economic development) Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice and 2010 - 2011 Annual Action Plan

The following information should be provided in the qualification submittal:

- A summary of the approach that will be used to perform the scope of work outlined above. Include a description of the 1) final product that will be provided and 2) a proposed work plan with a time line for each phase of the work plan.
- Brief explanation on the consultant firm's ability to adhere to a strict timeline, which may be required to meet HUD submittal deadline date.
- A general description of the firm's knowledge and experience in preparing Consolidated Plans, Annual Action Plans, Citizen Participation Plans, Analysis of Impediments, or other related planning documents.
- Identify all personnel that will be assigned to work on the project, including their qualifications and relevant experience. Please also identify the amount of time they will be assigned to specific project tasks and the project overall.

- Provide a list of at least three (3) public agencies, including the contact person's name and a phone number, for which similar or relevant work products have been completed and ultimately approved by HUD within the last 4 years.
- Provide the cost of services in a separate sealed document

Time is of the essence and the consultant must be able to adhere to an aggressive timeline that will meet the City's deadline to submit the required documents to HUD by May 15, 2010—no less than 45 days prior to start of City's Fiscal Year, July 1, 2010. The documents would need to be completed no later than March 1, 2010 to allow time for City of Columbia Council approval. (The Consultant will be required to identify the exact submittal date and coordinate its submittal with City Staff.)

Note: Regular meetings of the City Council are held the first and third Wednesdays of each month. The Consultant should be prepared to adhere to this schedule, if requested to make a presentation to City Council and while meeting HUD's public review/comment period of the draft Consolidated Plan/Annual Action Plan and public hearing requirements.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

- RFQ Issued **November 11, 2009**
- Qualifications Due Date , **November 20 , 2009**, no later than 3:00 pm
- Award of Contract **December 1, 2009**
- Project Start Date: **December 15, 2009**
- Project Completion: Submittal of Documents to HUD no later than May 15, 2010 (mandatory)

DOCUMENT SUBMITTALS

- To be considered, please submit five (5) copies of your qualification submittal
- All qualification submittals must be received at the address below, no later than: **November 20, 2009** **no later than 3:00 p.m. **
- All copies received by that date/time will be date and time stamped. Qualification submittals received after the due date/time will not be considered.

Submittals must be addressed to:

City of Columbia, SC
 Community Development Department
 1136 Washington Street Suite 300
 Columbia, S.C. 29201

RE: Consolidated Planning Services RFQ

Faxed or e-mailed submittals will not be accepted.

Hand carried submittals will be accepted before 3 p.m. during normal business hours Monday through Friday.

V. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The City will consider all submittals and award a contract to the Consultant that provides the best overall value for the City of Columbia. Accordingly, the City may use the following evaluation criteria to select a Consultant:

- Experience with fully preparing and submitting successful Consolidated Plan and other required documents
- Relevant qualifications of personnel
- Information obtained from references and firm's reputation
- Familiarity with applicable local, state and federal laws
- Knowledge of, or ability to acquire knowledge of, local issues and interested parties in the City of Columbia
- Approach to public outreach
- Approach to overall preparation of the required document described
- Proposed schedule and ability to meet City and HUD deadlines.
- Overall responsiveness to this RFQ and ability to satisfy HUD's submittal deadlines and requirements.

A materially incomplete or non-responsive submittal may be rejected. Please note that the ability of the Consultant team to satisfactorily complete the overall project within the anticipated completion schedule will be considered in the selection process. Cost, while not determinative, may be considered in the selection process.

VI. CITY OF COLUMBIA SELECTION PROCEDURE

An evaluation committee comprised of City staff will review each submittal.

1. **General Conditions:** The City reserves the right to cancel or reject all, or a portion or portions, of the request for submittals without notice. Further, the City makes no representations that any agreement will be awarded to any organization submitting a qualification packet. The City reserves the right to reject any and all submittals in response to this request or any addenda thereto.
2. **Liability of Costs and Responsibility:** The City shall not be liable for any costs incurred in response to this request for qualifications. All costs shall be borne by the person or organization responding to the request. The person or organization responding to the request shall hold the City harmless from any and all liability, claim or expense whatsoever incurred by or on behalf of that person or organization. All submitted material becomes the property of the City of Columbia. The selected Consultant shall be required to assume responsibility for all services offered in the submittal whether or not they possess them within their organization. The selected Consultant will be the sole point of contact with regard to contractual matters, including payment of any and all charges resulting from the contract.
3. **Validity:** The Consultant agrees to be bound by its submittal for a period of one-hundred and twenty (120) days commencing **December 1, 2009**, during which time the City may request clarification or corrections for the purpose of evaluation. Amendments or clarifications shall not affect the remainder of the submittal, but only the portion so amended or clarified.

4. Standard Agreement: It will be assumed that the selected Consultant is willing and able to enter into a Professional Services Agreement, which will not be executed by the City without the agreement first being signed by the Consultant. The Consultant will be responsible for adhering to, and complying with, requirements of the RFQ.
5. Permits and Licenses: Consultant, and all of Consultant's sub-consultants, at its and/or their sole expense, shall obtain and maintain during the term of any agreement, all appropriate permits, certificates and licenses which will be required in connection with the performance of services hereunder.
6. Oral and Written Explanations: The City will not be bound by oral explanations or instructions given at any time during the review process or after the award. Oral explanations given during the review process and after award become binding when confirmed in writing by an authorized City official.