



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

2009-02716-1024

November 5, 2008

OFFICE OF THE PURCHASING DIRECTOR

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STRATEGIC PLANNING SERVICES FOR INTEGRATION OF HUMAN SERVICES IN NEWPORT NEWS

Addendum 1

It is agreed and understood that this addendum shall be made part of the original RFP document. You are only required to return this cover page (filled out and signed) as proof you received the addendum that provided answers to questions asked.

The Proposal Due date remains the same.

Contract Officer: _____
Rose C. Kee, CPPB, Buyer, (757) 926-8028, email: rkee@nngov.com

Company Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ FAX No.: _____ E-mail: _____

Federal Tax ID (or Social Security #): _____

Print Name: _____ Title: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

This form must be signed.

RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS:

- 1). I have read through the above proposal and have some logistical questions.

Item 1 under *Submittals* states "The **Request for Proposal document** with any addenda acknowledgements filled out and signed as required." Since there is a space for Initials at the bottom of each of the 30 pages (except for the first page), my assumption is that the City requires the entire RFP to be signed/initialed and returned as part of any proposal. Is this assumption correct? - **Yes**

Some portions of the RFP (e.g., items 5 and 6) have space for the contractor to enter references, descriptions of the firm and contact information. As the RFP document is a PDF file, completing this information (other than by handwriting **(or typing)**, which may be difficult to read) is problematic. Would it be possible to receive a copy of the RFP as a Word (.doc) document? - **We purposely do not provide the document in Word format. This prevents possible changes to the document. This is our standard policy.**

Given that the RFP page count is 30 pages and additional descriptions of the services performed, descriptions of past performance and resumes of proposed contractor staff could account for another 20-30+ pages, would the City accept proposals in an alternative format? The alternative format would follow the organization of the RFP, duplicate the fields for references and other requested information and make a blanket statement to the effect that the contractor "accepts the terms and conditions contained in the RFP without exception"? Given the volume of copies requested and the number of potential pages duplicated production costs could be high and we are obviously looking for ways to save where possible. - **The RFP does not state very specific what format to use (general); however, most offerors do follow the format under submittals which makes it easier when the evaluation committee reviews all proposals. We are requesting that all information requested be included, and any additional applicable or related information (special attachments, certifications, etc.), and that the proposal shall be organized and bound separately. For example, rather than duplicating effort in providing references, you can mark our pages (see attached proposal page ____), and include the information in your proposal section. We are asking for the original RFP document (signed/initialed), and include your proposal, bounded and organized.**

We are requesting the original signed proposal and 13 copies. After opening the submittals, the copies will immediately be forwarded to the evaluation committee for review. This is also standard policy.

- 2). We are eager to know what incumbent contractors are involved with this project. This will be of great help. - There is no incumbent. We are seeking this service. That's the reason for the RFP.
- 3). Is the City of Newport News accepting proposals from out-of-state firms? - **The RFP is available to the public for fair competition. The City cannot discriminate on who should, and should not be allowed to respond. Qualified vendors/offerors must follow the requirements of the RFP. Please note that every business must register with the Virginia State Corporation Commission before transacting business in Virginia (see paragraph 14 of the Conditions and Instructions).**

On page 8, # 2, the last bullet point “Understanding and experience with Virginia’s funding strategies and mechanisms for comprehensive services” is identified as something that the offeror should be able to provide or show experience and understanding in. If the offeror has such understanding and extensive experience with human services strategic planning, systems change, stakeholder engagement, and integration of services in other states (Pennsylvania, West Virginia, etc.), would that experience meet this requirement or would offeror automatically be disqualified or receive a lower score in the evaluation process? - **No. The offeror would not be automatically disqualified, and we do not do scoring. This element is one of many factors in the evaluation process.**

Will extra points be provided to offerors if they have prior knowledge and/or experience with the City of Newport News and its Human Services system? - **The City of Newport News does not use scoring or points. The RFP (Evaluation Criteria section) specifically states “the proposals will be evaluated on the following criteria (listed in the order of importance).**

Are there specific “funding strategies and mechanisms for comprehensive services” in Virginia mandated by state law and or state agency policies that we should be aware of? - **Each member of the Human Services Leadership Council is supported by a number of stove-piped funding mechanisms that come from a variety of federal and state funding sources, and there’s oversight by different state agencies. Additionally, each member may have a policy or advisory board. In any event, the human service arena in Virginia is very much driven by federal and state activities and mandated requirements as a condition of receiving federal and state reimbursement. Each member has to adhere to mandated federal and state policies / procedures. For instance, the Newport News Department of Human Services (NNDHS) is supervised by the Virginia Department of Social Services, but locally administered by employees of NNDHS. NNDHS is a City department.**

Is there a budget cap (or upper limit) on what is available to support the project? - **Not sure what is being asked by question this question, but the budget for this project is finite.**

Will the City of Newport News be willing to negotiate proposed cost? **That is part of any RFP process. Negotiation. RFPs allows negotiations. IFB (Invitation for Bids) are specific and does not.**

Does the City of Newport News and/or the Human Services Leadership Council have an existing strategic plan (or has it completed strategic plans in the past)? - **There’s no existing strategic plan for the Human Services Leadership Council. City adopted a strategic plan in December 2007.**

Has the Human Services Leadership Council been working previously on service integration issues? - **No.**

On page 7, # 8, “attendance at meetings” is identified as a deliverable. How many meetings beyond those typically required to complete the project tasks (i.e., planning sessions, focus groups, interviews, etc.) are required and what is the length of these meetings? - **It’s difficult to provide estimates in terms of required number of meetings, focus groups, interview, etc., and the length of time for such meetings. It’s very likely that such details will need to be discussed with the shortlisted offeror(s) during negotiations, and award to the successful offeror. Offeror may want to plan on providing cost estimates for a total of 10 to 15 meetings / focus groups. Again, this is just an estimate.**

“Focus groups” are identified on page 7, # 5 under “deliverables.” How many focus groups are considered ideal for accurately assessing stakeholder views/input? How many would minimally meet this requirement, if funds are not available to support the ideal number? - **Again, trying to figure out an ideal number of focus groups amounts to pure speculation. Feel free to plan on providing cost estimates for a total of 5 to 10 focus groups. We are seeking responses from qualified/experienced offerors with the expertise in this area.**

“Interviews” are identified on page 7, # 5 under “deliverables.” How many key informant interviews are considered ideal for accurately assessing stakeholder views/input? How many would minimally meet this requirement, if funds are not available to support the ideal number? - **Response is the same as 10 above.**

“Surveys” are identified on page 7, # 5 under “deliverables.” How many surveys are considered ideal for accurately assessing stakeholder views/input? How many would minimally meet this requirement, if funds are not available to support the ideal number? - **Response is the same as 10 above.**

Does the City of Newport News want the strategic plan developed as a high impact marketing (glossy) piece to be used with funders, policy makers, etc. or a standard (non-glossy) report to be used internally? - **We certainly want a professional-looking final document, but at this point, there’s no thinking afloat that would indicate a strong need to have a “high impact...glossy piece” for funding sources or otherwise. Again, we are seeking expertise from qualified offerors.**

Does the City of Newport News wish to have printed copies of the strategic plan document or a digital “print ready” version? If printed copies are desired, how many copies are desired? - **If digital “print ready” means that we will be able to print out a strategic plan in Word with all attachments, 8 ½ x 11, then the answer to this question is yes; however, we do not want to be restrictive. Provide your expertise to us.**

Does the City of Newport News have a preferred proposal format or is this open for the vendor to determine? - **This is open for the vendor to present a format that is compelling and easy to understand by elected officials, the Human Services Leadership Council, other human service professionals and the general citizenry living in Newport News.**

On page 7, under submittals, it is stated that “each proposal shall be organized and bound separately.” Please clarify specifically how the City wishes the proposals to be bound (i.e., staples, binder clips, spiral binding, etc.). - **We only stated that the submittals be organized and bound. Basically presented and bound in a professional manner.**

- 4). Level of effort for the strategic plan. - **(We are not sure what is being asked. Are you asking for the total amount that has been budgeted for this project? If you are, there is no figure to provide at this point).**

Length of the proposal. - **This is a request for proposals. We are not restricting the offerors. (The need is for a well-thought proposal that is responsive to the RFP, and organized and bound in a professional manner).**

Deliverables:

Deliverable 3 - Conducting an environmental scan is essential to developing the methodology for this project / report. Also, the results of the environmental scan would be fully disclosed or incorporated into the final report.

Deliverable 5 - Conducting meetings and focus groups is essential to developing the methodology for this project / report. Also, the findings / results of the meetings/focus groups would be fully disclosed or incorporated into the final report.

Deliverable 7 - Exploring best practices/research is essential to developing the methodology for this project / report. Also, the findings / results of the research would be fully disclosed or incorporated into the final report.

Please keep in mind that RFPs are general on our end. We've provided as much background information as we could. We are seeking the expertise from qualified offerors, to tell us what they can do for us.

- 5). What is the City's budget for preparation of the strategic plan? - **This information is not available.**

Please confirm the submittal is comprised of the RFP document, with forms filled in, pages initialed, any and all addenda, and any responses from us (that cannot fit onto the RFP document) to be provided in a separate letter/document. - **Correct.**

Does the submittal of the RFP document require us to include the original and 13 copies of Exhibit A, which is 17 pages, for bidder information purposes only, and does not require a response? - **The original submittal will be for the Purchasing Department. The 13 copies will be for the evaluation committee. Exhibit A is part of the RFP document, because it provides background information for the various agencies stated in the RFP. Our policy is for the offeror to return the complete RFP document; however, it is not necessary or mandatory that you return exhibit A.**

Submittal instructions for items 3 and 5 (page 8) both seem to be requesting the same information. Please verify whether these are the same or clarify the difference in what is being requested so that we can respond appropriately. - **Correct. 3 and 5 are almost duplicate. Please respond to #5 (more detailed). See section 17 of this addendum.**

In the submittal instructions there is no item requesting our approach to conducting the study, although Item H of the Evaluation Criteria states "The degree to which the offeror has responded to the purpose and scope of the specifications..." Should there be a submittal item that requests our approach? - **If this is possible, you can include this in your proposal. (See "SUBMITTAL" paragraph, second sentence, "Include all information requested and any other information thought to be relevant to completely address the Request for Proposals [RFP] requirements". Please provide any additional information that will be helpful. The RFP document is general with some background data (unlike IFBs, Invitation for Bids, which are specific). We are asking for your expertise.**

- 6). Under the section entitled Scope of Desired Services, there is a reference to a "Consultant". Does this refer to the consulting firm as a whole, or indicate that there is an expectation that only one individual will be performing this work? - **Consultant refers to consulting firm as a whole (the successful offeror).**
- 7). Can you provide an MS Word electronic copy of the RFP to allow vendors to complete electronically? - **We purposely do not provide the document in Word format. This prevents possible changes to the document. This is our standard policy.**

Do you need each page of the RFP to be initialed? - **Please sign all pages where noted and initial all pages where noted.**

- 8.) Should the vendor initial each page of the RFP in the space provided or if that is for City use? - **It's for the vendor to initial. Not the City**
- 9). Where do you see item "B" under Evaluation Criteria fitting into the requirements as outlined under the Submittals section of the RFP? - **This is the detailed response to the RFP where you have demonstrated an understanding of the desired scope of services based your company knowledge, skills, experience, past performance, references, previous projects, and any additional related information you wish to share. Basically show the City of Newport News Human Services that you understand the request. We are seeking offerors that have expertise in this area. Again, the proposal document should show or demonstrate this.**

Under the Submittals section, are items 3 & 5 the same, or are you looking for different information? - **Correct. 3 and 5 are almost duplicate. Please respond to #5 (more detailed). See section 17 of this addendum.**

- 10). What was the completion date of the previous strategic plan? - **There is no previous strategic plan.**

Can we obtain a copy of the previous strategic plan? - **See previous response.**

Can we obtain a copy of the previous statement of work and corresponding information about the company(s) that won previous contract(s)? - **See previous response.**

Can we receive the contract dollar amount awarded for the previous contract(s)? - **See previous response.**

What type of examples are you seeking from bidders to demonstrate the following: "Understanding and experience with Virginia's funding strategies and mechanisms for comprehensive services? - **We want the offerors to provide specific examples of their work experience and knowledge of how the system of care is funded in Virginia and how the funding streams support or finance services being provided by the Hampton-Newport News Community Services Board, Human Services (social services in Virginia), Health Department, Juvenile Services, Library and Public Information Services, etc. The point is that in Virginia, these entities are given categorical funding which are tied to strict policies and guidelines that regulate service provision in Virginia. The system of care is very "stove-piped" with not a lot of room for flexibility and creativity across the system of care. So, we were trying to get a sense of the offeror understanding and experience with Virginia's setup.**

The offerors need to cite specific examples of how they have worked with entities that rely heavily on federal, state and local funding that are heavily state regulated by multiple state agencies (e.g., Virginia Department of Social Services, State Health Department, State Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse, the Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services).

We are a newly formed company, is it acceptable to provide localities and references for key staff that will work on the contract in lieu of company references to comply with the following: Reference list of at least three localities and/or firms that have requested similar work which your firm has provided services...”? and Provide at least three client references for projects that are similar or which best demonstrate your firm’s ability to complete the proposed project successfully? - **Our request for this section remains the same. We are requesting references as stated. We are seeking proposals from qualified offerors with experience. Items 3 and 5 are almost duplicate. Please respond to #5 (more detailed). Include contact name(s), addresses, telephone numbers, and name of government agency and/or firm(s).**

- 11). Condition #16 indicates that we should check with your office to ensure that we have a complete, up-to-date package. The package we have consists of 30 pages and is dated October 15. Do we have the full package? - **Yes.** Will there be any addenda issued between now and November 10? - **Yes. The addenda will provide answers to questions asked up through today. After today. We will not accept additional questions.**

The section on Submittals indicates that the proposal should include the RFP document. Does this mean we should return the entire 30 page RFP, including Exhibit A? - **Yes. Exhibit A is part of the RFP document, because it provides background information for the various agencies stated in the RFP. Our policy is for the offeror to return the complete RFP document; however, it is not necessary or mandatory that you return exhibit A.**

There is a line at the bottom of each page for Initials. There is no direction in the RFP that we are to initial each page. Is this a requirement? - **It’s for the vendor to initial. Not the City.**

If we are indeed returning the 30 page RFP as a submittal form, there is no space for response to submittal items 2, 3, and 4. The conditions indicate that if more space is needed, we may attach a letter. Is this a cover letter that precedes the RFP document, or is it inserted into the middle of the RFP where the items for response appear? - **This is up to you. You can provide this information in your proposal as an attachment.**

How do submittal items 3 and 5 differ? Item 3 asks for at least three localities where we have provided similar work, including names, addresses, and phone numbers. Item 5 also asks for three references for similar projects, with names, addresses, and phone numbers. The only difference we can see is that item 5 is part of the form itself and includes a description of the work performed. Are these indeed the same three references for both items? - **Items 3 and 5 are almost duplicate. Please respond to #5 (more detailed). Include contact name(s), addresses, telephone numbers, and name of government agency and/or firm(2).**

Submittal item 4 asks for a price, but does not include any requirement for an actual budget breakdown. Is a detailed budget not required? - **This information is not available. This is part of the reason for doing a Request for Proposals. We are seeking vendors that have expertise in this area. Please provide a cost, or cost breakdown for your services, and cost for any add-on's (marked "optional").**

- 12). The instructions indicate that all proposals must be submitted **ON** this form. The RFP on your website is only in pdf format, which means we cannot enter information onto the document. Would you please provide a copy as a Word document? - **We purposely do not provide the document in Word format. This prevents changes to the document. This is our standard policy. Please include your respond in your proposal as an attachment to our RFP.**

The very first item under conditions says "All proposals must be submitted **on** and in accordance with this form." And, as you indicated, the full 30 page RFP has to be returned with the response. There are items that must be filled out on the form, it would appear, such as the company name, etc. on page 1, the reference information for submittal item #5, and the additional contract data information for submittal item 6. We would prefer to not have to retype the entire RFP in order to fill out this information. - **"On and in accordance with this form" means where space is provided or where applicable (signatures, initials, Reference Information, Additional contract data. All areas that needs to be filled in on the RFP document). For the other areas, you will need to attach or submit your detail respond to the RFP document. This does not mean you need to retype the entire RFP document. The total proposal package is the signed/completed RFP, and your proposal (which is to be submitted with the RFP). Again, the RFP is not provided in Word format.**

However, where space is provided we are to enter the information on the form, and the spaces provided for the references are not large enough to enter the requested information (for example, look at the "City and State" box). Even the name of the agency is too small to accommodate a full name. - **A suggestion is to type in "see attached proposal", and provide the information in your proposal document.**

- 13). On page 16, the text near the bottom states that the Department of Human Services organizational chart can be sent upon request. Would you please e-mail the organizational chart to me? - **See Attachment to this email, or contact the contract officer for a direct email or fax of document.**
- 14). On page 8 of the above mentioned RFP, within the section entitled, SUBMITTALS, items 3 and 5 seem to be very similar – a request for 3 client references. Can you please explain the difference between the two items? I see that each asks for slightly different information, but the topics seem to be very similar. We want to make sure we sufficiently address the topics so that the evaluators' questions are answered. - **Correct. 3 and 5 are almost duplicate requests. Please respond to #5 (more detailed). See section 17 of this addendum.**

- 15). How will the city government participate in the project? Will any city government employees be dedicated to the project? Should the selected provider expect only percentages of some employees' time to be given to the project? - **Right now, there's no one dedicated 100% to the project, however, the leadership of the respective agencies / organizations are committed to completing a process for human services integration. You should expect only percentages of some employees' time at this point but the door is not closed in terms of discussing the value in having some dedicated staff.**

If one or more city government employees will be dedicated to the project, please describe their roles in the project. - **Same as above.**

If one or more city government employees will be dedicated to the project, at what level in the government do they project? - **Same as above.**

How has, or how will, the city government prepare its employees for this project? This project should require many interviews and other types of meetings. The project should progress smoothly as long as those involved in meetings are supportive of the study. - **The leadership of the respective agencies / organizations involved in this project will be responsible for ensuring that their staff is supportive of the project.**

Are all groups within the Department of Human Services to be part of this project? If not, which groups are to be excluded? - **Yes, but we may need to figure out exactly what is meant by "groups within the Department of Human Services." The thrust would be to be as inclusive as possible.**

What is the timeline for the award? - **See below.**

- 16). What is the anticipated award date? - **This is something we cannot determine at this time. As with most RFPs, this will be based on the number of submittals we have to review/evaluate, the type of responses received, those short-listed, and the negotiation process.**

What is the budget for completing this effort? - **This is information is not known.**

Is there a line item for funding this project in the 2008 or 2009 budget? - **No.**

On page 7 of the RFP you state, "The **Request for Proposal document** with any addenda acknowledgements filled out and signed as required". Do you expect all 30 pages to be included in the submission or just page 1 (plus any required addenda)? - **We requested our RFP document to be signed and completed (item number 1 under "Submittals", The "Request for Proposal document").**

Is there an incumbent on the project? If so, who? - **There is not incumbent. The reason for the RFP is to seek a vendor with the expertise in this area.**

Your RFP is 30 pages. You want 14 copies of our response. Are you expecting us to provide all 30 pages in each copy (that would be a total of 420 pages)? Or do you just want the signature page of your RFP? - **Again, we are requesting that you return our RFP document to us (sign and complete all areas). Exhibit A is part of the RFP document, because it provides background information for the various agencies stated in the RFP. Our policy is for the offeror to return the complete RFP document; however, it is not necessary or mandatory that you return exhibit A.**

- 17). In Section SUBMITTALS, Items 3 and 5 - What are the differences in these two sections? Are the references required in two separate areas? - **Items 3 and 5 are almost duplicate. Please respond to #5 (more detailed). Include contact name(s), addresses, telephone numbers, and name of government agency and/or firm(2).**

What is the format requested for the proposal. Should we convert the pdf file into Word and answer each question throughout the whole RFP and initial the bottom of the page, or can we provide our proposal in another format? - **We did not specify a format, and we purposely do not provide the document in Word format. This prevents changes to the document. This is our standard policy. Please include your respond in your proposal as an attachment to our RFP.**

- 18). Attendance at meetings - what is frequency of meetings anticipated (other than those related directly to the *purpose of this RFP*)? *For example, are their monthly or quarterly meetings that are held on a regular basis that you would like us to attend and provide updates?* - **There are no regular meetings as such that we would like for you to attend, however, when the time comes to conduct focus groups/meetings with staff, there may be an opportunity to get on the agenda when staff has its standard staff or unit meeting.**

Is there a high level organization chart including all of the agencies / departments with number of staff in each that will be included in the strategic planning process? The RFP indicates improving the responsiveness of several Human Service agencies and provides a list indicating “including, but not limited to”. - **No, each agency or entity involved in the human services integration RFP may or may not have a “high level organization chart showing number of staff.”**

Please provide clarification on the 2 types of references requested (page 8 #'s 3 and 5) below :

Reference list of at least three (3) localities and/or firms that have requested d similar work which your firm has provided services for; include names, addresses, and telephone numbers. - **See below.**

*Provide at least three (3) client *references for projects that are similar or which best demonstrate your firm’s ability to complete the proposed project successfully. Include a brief description of the project, client, and the teaming effort, both previous and proposed.* - **See response to section 17 above.**

What is your staff availability (admin assistant etc) for helping set up focus groups and scheduling ?-

All agencies involved in the human services integration project recognize that there must be strong coordination internally to establish meeting times and place. However, if the vendor sends an email to our support staff who works for different bosses, I’m sure assistance will be provided in setting up or scheduling meetings. I don’t anticipate support staff being devoted 100% of her time to the human services integration project.

Under deliverables (page 7, # 8) request our attendance at meetings. Other than those associated with delivering the RFP requirements, what is the frequency of the meetings ? Monthly quarterly ? -

It’s difficult to provide estimates in terms of required number of meetings, focus groups, interviews, etc., and the length of time for such meetings. It’s very likely that such details will need to be discussed with the successful offeror. Offeror may want to plan on providing cost estimates for a total of 10 to 15 meetings / focus groups, of you ask me to wage a guess.

What will be the access to the documentation of the other organizations (non-stakeholders – exhibit A) ? -

There are no “non-stakeholders” as such. Every organization listed is a stakeholder. We’re committed to assisting any vendor with access to information. I don’t see a problem with access to information.

*With respect to the due date for response to this RFP, what time is considered close of business. - **Our hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (EST)***