



CITY OF DUBUQUE, IOWA

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

CONSULTANT SERVICES FOR DEVELOPMENT OF A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR THE WASHINGTON NEIGHBORHOOD

INTRODUCTION

The City of Dubuque is seeking proposals from qualified firms to provide professional planning services associated with the Washington: *Revitalize!* initiative.

The purpose of the Washington initiative is to revitalize an historical downtown neighborhood. The strategy includes promoting an increase in homeownership, encouraging a mix of household incomes, reducing concentrated poverty and the high percentage of rental units, and building non-profit capacity to provide housing and supportive services. It also involves targeting City resources and infrastructure improvements and concentrated code enforcement.

BACKGROUND

The Washington revitalization effort was introduced in June 2005 in recognition of a decline in neighborhood conditions. These were identified in a consultant report issued in 2004 which noted the poor appearance and lack of maintenance in housing, depressed property valuations and high vacancy rates in the area. The report concluded a need to stimulate renovation of residential properties and to provide more homeownership opportunities, including for moderate-income families.

The Washington Neighborhood is a 55+ square block area located in the oldest residential part of downtown Dubuque. It contains approximately 450 single and duplex residences, with scattered multi-unit rentals and commercial and institutional buildings. Residential property valuations are 44% of the City-wide average. 86% of the housing was built before 1939. 70% of the units are renter-occupied; 68% of residents report income below 80% of area median. 2000 Census data indicates an average vacancy rate of 13% for all housing. In the past several years, the neighborhood has become more racially and culturally diverse, although Census data reports only a 2% non-white population.

The neighborhood is served by two public K-5 elementary schools, including the new Prescott charter school and Audubon on the north boundary. Six churches are located

within the area. Several non-profit organizations provide direct services, including the new Crescent Community Health Center, Multicultural Family Center and the HEART Program – a vocational training program for at-risk youth which rehabilitates neighborhood housing. A neighborhood retail center with full-service supermarket is located at the 5 Points. Orange Park was dedicated in 2007. Banks and credit unions are located within the service area.

The housing - the oldest in the City - has retained much of its historic character. Many block fronts are intact, with small (25-50 foot wide) lots and rear alleys with garages and off-street parking. The many historical front stoops contribute to a pedestrian-friendly feel in the core residential area of the neighborhood.

The Washington Neighborhood faces many challenges and opportunities. To the immediate east, the former Dubuque Pack site is being readied for redevelopment as Riverview Plaza, a new 39 acre shopping center. To the south, the Warehouse District – with over 1 million square feet of available developable space – is now being transformed into an historic district, envisioning upper-end condos, artist lofts, restaurants and office spaces for small entrepreneurial firms. And to the immediate north and east, the Bee Branch Creek Realignment Project will bifurcate the neighborhood from the North End, remove 70 homes, close many streets and alter traffic patterns throughout the area. This \$32 million storm water mitigation project will commence construction activities within the next 24 months.

As mentioned, the neighborhood is experiencing a changing demographic. Many lower-income families are moving to Dubuque from larger metropolitan areas in Illinois and Wisconsin. The challenge is to connect these new residents with economic, social and educational opportunities, so that they improve their quality of life and assimilate into the Dubuque community.

Other significant issues and opportunities for the neighborhood include:

- public safety and the perception of increasing crime
- enforcement of housing and zoning ordinances in rental properties
- “re-marketing” the image of the area – both to residents and to citizens throughout the City – as an attractive place to live, purchase and improve homes and raise families
- avoidance of gentrification
- application of ‘green’ and energy-conserving technologies

Building upon its historical character, the end goal is to ‘re-invent’ the area as a neighborhood of choice for all citizens.

A citizen/stakeholder-participation “visioning” process took place over a four-month period in 2007, with the objective of defining a desired future for the neighborhood. The consultant’s report identified the following assets:

- schools
- the Community Health Center
- housing and service providers

- the Multicultural Family Center
- Orange Park
- the supermarket, restaurants, churches, small businesses and lending institutions
- the City's community-oriented policing program

Liabilities included:

- too many rental properties
- heavy traffic
- too many bars and related behavior problems
- lack of housing maintenance, including chronic trash and uncut grass problems
- vacant houses and storefronts
- lack of off-street parking
- uncaring landlords and disrespectful tenants
- a lack of neighborhood-service retail and restaurants

Major goals for the neighborhood were summarized as follows:

1. Economic development: support and maintain a variety of businesses to meet the employment and service needs of residents
2. Community pride: civic involvement and community-building opportunities for all age groups to increase community pride
3. Education/recreation: ample opportunities for education and positive recreational activities for all ages, year-round
4. Housing: sufficient housing options for all residents, with an increase in home ownership to reflect City-wide rates
5. Infrastructure: sufficient to meet neighborhood needs and contribute to a sustainable and aesthetically-pleasing physical environment
6. Property maintenance: increased maintenance and historically-sensitive improvements to all properties, to maximize property values and reinforce a sense of pride in the neighborhood
7. Safety: the neighborhood will be a safe and inviting place for people of all ages, and will be perceived this way by all Dubuque residents

PROJECT SUMMARY/SCOPE OF WORK

The intended work product is a comprehensive, citizen participation-based plan for the Washington Neighborhood. It will translate the 'vision' into specific action steps, to direct future land use and development, both short- and long-term. It will address the concerns listed above, both for current conditions and for the future as appropriate. It will be a consensus-developed planning strategy for the neighborhood..

The consultant will facilitate a number of planning sessions (and/or other input methods) in order to meaningfully solicit resident ideas in development of the plan. These sessions will include the participation of a citizen coordinating committee, comprised of neighborhood residents and other stakeholders, and City staff. The proposal should describe ways of promoting wider neighborhood participation in the public discussion

process. Consultant findings and recommendations will be reviewed in these public sessions, on a scheduled basis, for review and feed-back.

Plan elements should include the following:

1. Background/history, including reference to the Washington: Revitalize initiative and visioning process
2. Demographics; existing land uses
3. Identification of current issues for the neighborhood
4. Goals and objectives
5. Strategies and implementation steps for achieving the goals and objectives
6. Estimation of capital budgeting costs for implementation
7. Preparation of relevant documents and maps/over-lays/graphics/ photographs
8. Appendix documenting the public participation process

In addition, the consultant is expected to research and present “best practices” illustrations of successful community development efforts in other urban neighborhoods. The purpose is to provide options and alternatives for initiatives to be incorporated into the final plan, for revitalizing the Washington Neighborhood. These examples can include housing, economic development, citizen-based initiatives, public-private partnerships, corporate- and school-sponsored efforts and other ‘success stories’ for Dubuque applications. Recommendations should be made for incorporation of successful models to address the identified needs and opportunities of the neighborhood.

The completed plan document will be produced in hard copy form, 50 copies; and electronic format. The consultant will make a presentation of the final plan to the Washington Neighborhood Association and the City Council.

QUALIFICATIONS

A professional consultant experienced in the areas of group facilitation and group process, neighborhood or downtown planning will be retained by the City, to prepare the work products described above. The selected consultant must have the requisite experience and training and have performed similar work for other clients.

INFORMATION TO BE INCLUDED IN PROPOSAL

To simplify the review process and to obtain the maximum degree of comparability, the proposal shall include the following information and shall be organized in the manner specified below.

Letter of Transmittal

Provide a letter of transmittal briefly outlining the firm’s understanding of the work and the name, address and contact numbers of the firm’s primary contact person.

Profile of Firm

Provide general information about the firm and firm’s area of expertise, including the qualifications of the personnel who will be assigned to this project.

- a. The proposal shall include the name of the anticipated project manager, his or her qualifications and experience; including experience in performing similar work.
- b. The proposal shall include at least three references of past clients. These projects must have been completed within the past five years with the same project manager, consultants and other key personnel proposed for this project.
- c. The proposal shall discuss the firm's ability to integrate this contract into the present workload.

Proposed Project Schedule

Provide a project schedule outlining the time period and estimated completion date for each element of the proposed scope of services. Include specific bench-marks for reporting of progress, to be submitted to the citizen coordinating committee and to the City Council.

The schedule should include delivery date for work products and periodic project status reports; public meetings with the citizen coordinating committee; and up-date meetings or teleconferences with a staff oversight committee, consisting of representatives from the Housing, Health, Leisure Services, Human Rights, Planning and Police Departments and the City Manager's Office.

Fees and Compensation

Provide a proposed cost budget for completion of the proposed scope of services with cost breakdowns. Quotation of fees shall remain firm for a period of at least 90 days from the proposed submission deadline. *Please separate the proposed budget from the other portion of the RFP submittal.* Initial screening will be done by the selection committee without benefit of knowing the consultant's proposed fee for services.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

An original plus five copies, plus an electronic copy, of the proposal must be received in the Housing Department, 350 West 6th Street, by 14 March, 2008.

Each bidding firm assumes full responsibility for delivery and deposit of the completed proposal package on or before the deadline. The City of Dubuque is not responsible for any loss or delay with respect to delivery of the proposals. The City of Dubuque reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and negotiate changes with any consultant. The City of Dubuque is not liable for the cost incurred by any consultant prior to the execution of an agreement or contract. The City of Dubuque is not liable for any costs incurred by the consultant that are not specified in any contract. The City of Dubuque is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

All correspondence regarding this RFP should be directed to David Harris, Director, Housing and Community Development Dept, Dubuque, Iowa, 52001, by telephone at 563-589-4239, by fax at 563-589-4244, or by email at dharris@cityofdubuque.org.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposals will be screened to ensure that they meet the minimum requirements of the proposal format. A review of qualifying proposals will be evaluated by a selection committee. Consultants may be invited to an interview with the selection committee. Evaluation criteria will include the following:

- Experience and achievements of the firm.
- Qualifications and experience of principal staff or project team on similar projects.
- Grasp of project requirements, understanding of project scope and level of interest by firm.
- Design approach/methodology in completing the scope of services.
- Approach to communication throughout the project, including methods to promote public involvement and engage neighborhood residents
- Ability to deliver the products in a timely manner and within budget.
- Ability to maintain a high level of direct interaction and communication with City staff and the citizen advisory group
- Public facilitation capabilities and experience in working with the public
- Ability to produce hi-quality, user-friendly documents with hi-quality graphics
- Proposed schedule to complete the project.
- Proposed cost to complete the project.

SCHEDULE C

INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

1. All policies of insurance required hereunder shall be with an insurer authorized to do business in Iowa. All insurers shall have a rating of A or better in the current A.M. Best Rating Guide.
2. All policies of insurance shall be endorsed to provide a thirty (30) day advance notice of cancellation to the City of Dubuque if cancellation is prior to the expiration date. This endorsement supersedes the standard cancellation statement on the Certificate of Insurance.
3. _____ shall furnish a Certificate of Insurance to the City of Dubuque, Iowa for the coverage required in Paragraph 6 below. Such Certificates shall include copies of the following endorsements:
 - a) Thirty day notice of cancellation to the City of Dubuque.
 - b) Commercial General Liability policy is primary and non-contributing.
 - c) Commercial General Liability additional insured endorsement.
 - d) Governmental Immunities Endorsement.
 - e) Waiver of Recovery under workers compensation.

_____ shall also be required to provide Certificates of Insurance of all subcontractors and all sub-sub contractors who perform work or services pursuant to the provisions of this contract. Said certificates shall meet the same insurance requirements as required of _____.

4. Each certificate shall be submitted to the contracting department of the City of Dubuque.
5. Failure to provide minimum coverage shall not be deemed a waiver of these requirements by the City of Dubuque. Failure to obtain or maintain the required insurance shall be considered a material breach of this agreement.
6. Contractor shall be required to carry the following minimum coverage/limits or greater if required by law or other legal agreement:

a) COMMERCIAL GENERAL LIABILITY

General Aggregate Limit	\$2,000,000
Products-Completed Operations Aggregate Limit	\$1,000,000
Personal and Advertising Injury Limit	\$1,000,000
Each Occurrence Limit	\$1,000,000
Fire Damage Limit (any one occurrence)	\$ 50,000
Medical Payments	\$ 5,000

This coverage shall be written on an occurrence, not claims made, form per project. All deviations or exclusions from the standard ISO commercial general liability form CG 0001 or Business owners BP 0002 shall be clearly identified.
Governmental Immunity endorsement identical or equivalent to form attached.

An additional insured endorsement identical or equivalent to ISO Form CG 2026 and include as additional insured: “The City of Dubuque, including all its elected and appointed officials, all its employees and volunteers, all its boards, commissions and/or authorities and their board members, employees, and volunteers.”

b) WORKERS COMPENSATION & EMPLOYERS LIABILITY

Statutory for Coverage A
Employers Liability: \$100,000 each accident
 \$100,000 each employee-disease
 \$500,000 policy limit—disease

Policy shall include an endorsement waiving right of recovery against City of Dubuque.

c) PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY: \$1,000,000

d) UMBRELLA/EXCESS LIABILITY

Coverage to be determined on a case-by-case basis by Finance Director.

POLICY NUMBER
GENERAL LIABILITY

COMMERCIAL

THIS ENDORSEMENT CHANGES THE POLICY. PLEASE READ IT CAREFULLY.

**ADDITIONAL INSURED – DESIGNATED PERSON OR
ORGANIZATION**

This endorsement modifies insurance provided under the following:

COMMERCIAL GENERAL LIABILITY COVERAGE PART.

SCHEDULE

Name of Person Or Organization:

The City of Dubuque, including all its elected and appointed officials, all its employees and volunteers, all its boards, commissions and/or authorities and their board members, employees, and volunteers.

(If no entry appears above, information required to complete this endorsement will be shown in the Declarations as applicable to this endorsement.)

WHO IS AN INSURED (Section II) is amended to include as an insured the person or organization shown in the Schedule as an insured but only with respect to liability arising out of your operations or premises owned by or rented to you.

CITY OF DUBUQUE, IOWA

GOVERNMENTAL IMMUNITIES ENDORSEMENT

1. Nonwaiver of Governmental Immunity. The insurance carrier expressly agrees and states that the purchase of this policy and the including of the City of Dubuque, Iowa as an Additional Insured does not waive any of the defenses of governmental immunity available to the City of Dubuque, Iowa under Code of Iowa Section 670.4 as it is now exists and as it may be amended from time to time.
2. Claims Coverage. The insurance carrier further agrees that this policy of insurance shall cover only those claims not subject to the defense of governmental immunity under the Code of Iowa Section 670.4 as it now exists and as it may be amended from time to time. Those claims not subject to Code of Iowa Section 670.4 shall be covered by the terms and conditions of this insurance policy.
3. Assertion of Government Immunity. The City of Dubuque, Iowa shall be responsible for asserting any defense of governmental immunity, and may do so at any time and shall do so upon the timely written request of the insurance carrier.
4. Non-Denial of Coverage. The insurance carrier shall not deny coverage under this policy and the insurance carrier shall not deny any of the rights and benefits accruing to the City of Dubuque, Iowa under this policy for reasons of governmental immunity unless and until a court of competent jurisdiction has ruled in favor of the defense(s) of governmental immunity asserted by the City of Dubuque, Iowa.

No Other Change in Policy. The above preservation of governmental immunities shall not otherwise change or alter the coverage available under the policy.