



Request for Proposal

Evaluation of the 100,000 Homes Campaign

Issued Date: February 11, 2014

Deadline for Proposals: February 28, 2014, 5:00 PM EST

Submit Proposal To: Paul Howard at
phoward@cmtysolutions.org

Community Solutions invites qualified consultants to submit a proposal to provide an evaluation of the 100,000 Homes Campaign, as described in this Request for Proposal (RFP). The term of the contract will be approximately 5 months.

Applicants must be prepared and available to discuss their proposals with Community Solutions via phone or email on February 28, 2014, the deadline for proposals, and March 7, 2014, the date of the selection announcement.

Questions regarding this RFP must be submitted via email to Paul Howard at phoward@cmtysolutions.org no later than 5:00 pm EST on February 17, 2014. Community Solutions will provide a written answer to each question submitted, and responses will be posted via a link on the 100,000 Homes Campaign website at www.100Khomes.org.

A. Background on the Campaign

The 100,000 Homes Campaign (“Campaign”) is a national movement of over 230 communities working together to find permanent homes for 100,000 of the sickest, longest-term homeless Americans by July 2014. Participating communities have already moved more than 80,000 people into permanent housing, transforming their public systems along the way. Coordinated by Community Solutions and supported by a broad base of national and local partners, the Campaign aims to help communities turn bureaucratic social service systems into efficient housing placement machines that quickly and reliably move the most long-term and vulnerable homeless people from the streets into permanent housing. As a movement, we are not interested in managing homelessness indefinitely. We are interested in ending it.

Towards meeting the Campaign’s goal of housing 100,000 vulnerable and chronically homeless individuals by July 2014, Community Solutions has focused on helping participating communities make improvements in 4 key areas:

1. Housing First: The traditional methods for addressing homelessness have required individuals and families to demonstrate sobriety, stability, and “readiness” before they are placed in permanent housing. While the intentions behind this approach were good, the unfortunate result was that very few of the most long-term homeless Americans ever escaped the streets. Successful Campaign communities instead support the “housing first” approach for homeless individuals and families systems-wide, which places people directly in permanent housing with accompanying supportive services, rather than first requiring them to complete transitional programs or achieve treatment milestones. Research has exhaustively demonstrated housing first as the most effective way to end homelessness permanently for the sickest and longest-term homeless individuals while simultaneously reducing public costs.¹

2. Knowing and prioritizing the chronically homeless and the most vulnerable: Person-specific data is the key to ending homelessness for our most vulnerable (and often anonymous) homeless neighbors. Towards helping communities identify and prioritize the most vulnerable and chronically homeless individuals living on the streets, Community Solutions reviewed medical research that identifies eight risk factors making homeless individuals more likely to die on the streets.² The research led to the creation of a survey tool, the Vulnerability Index (VI), which screens individuals for the eight conditions and helps communities identify the vulnerable individuals most in need of housing.³ More than 100 communities have used the tool during Registry Weeks, when

¹ For example, see Sarah Rynearson, Blake Barrett, and Colleen Clark, *Housing First: A Review of the Literature* (Tampa: National Center on Homelessness among Veterans, 2010). http://mhlp.fmhi.usf.edu/publications/view_publication.cfm?PUBLICATIONID=162

² Stephen W. Hwang, et al, “Risk Factors for Death in Homeless Adults in Boston,” *Archives of Internal Medicine* 158 (1998): 1454-1460. <http://100khomes.org/sites/default/files/loi70748.pdf>

³ For more information on the Vulnerability Index, see the short background document on the 100,000 Homes website: <http://100khomes.org/resources/about-the-vulnerability-index>

local volunteers comb the streets for several mornings in a row to survey their homeless neighbors. These VI surveys, completed by volunteers, have helped each community build a database with the names, photos, health conditions, and institutional and social histories of its homeless residents. Communities then use this database to prioritize the highest acuity individuals for placement into permanent housing.

Today, many communities are shifting to an even more powerful tool, the VI-SPDAT, which merges key elements of the VI with the Service Prioritization and Decision Assistance Tool to help communities leverage their full range of housing interventions to move their most vulnerable homeless neighbors into housing.

3. Tracking and measuring progress: The Campaign operates on the belief that ending homelessness will not be possible until every community rigorously tracks and measures its progress on a monthly basis and makes calculated adjustments to improve performance. Campaign communities therefore have committed to reporting their housing progress monthly to Community Solutions and to measuring their performance against clear and carefully determined benchmarks. Community Solutions uses the monthly data to prepare detailed, individually tailored performance reports for each community enrolled in the Campaign. These reports outline a community's progress toward its goal of ending homelessness and compare its efforts to the performance of similarly sized and resourced communities around the country. All communities are encouraged to work toward housing at least 2.5% of their chronic and vulnerable homeless neighbors each month, a figure that puts them squarely on track to end homelessness in roughly four years.

4. Improving local systems. Many communities do not have a clear, intentionally developed process for moving homeless people from the streets to permanent housing quickly and efficiently. Typically, different local agencies and organizations own different pieces of the housing process, rarely communicate with one another, and have different steps and requirements for completing applications. By applying process improvement techniques drawn from industry and the private sector to local housing and human service work, Campaign communities have made housing processes simpler, faster and better targeted. Many communities have dramatically reduced the time required to house a single individual. Others have logged measurable improvements in outreach, resource targeting and service delivery.

Because homeless veterans tend to remain homeless longer than their peers and suffer mental illness and deadly health conditions at significantly higher rates, the Campaign has also joined forces with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Got Your 6 to help move more than 22,000 vulnerable and chronically homeless veterans into permanent housing.

100,000 Homes communities work closely with their local VA teams to identify the most vulnerable people on their streets and help them access VA resources. More than 60 communities have also participated in Rapid Results trainings with the Community Solutions,

VA, the Rapid Results Institute, the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the US Interagency Council on Homelessness. These trainings have helped local teams shrink the amount of time a homeless veteran must wait to access permanent housing by as much as 80 percent and more than double their monthly housing rates.

B. Purpose of the Evaluation

Community Solutions seeks a qualified consultant or team of consultants for the purpose of evaluating the impact of the 100,000 Homes Campaign and the extent to which the Campaign has helped communities move their most vulnerable and chronically homeless neighbors into permanent housing more effectively and efficiently. Community Solutions expects the consultant to test and evaluate the following:

1. Whether participating communities have placed 100,000 chronic and vulnerable homeless individuals in permanent housing.
2. The extent to which participating communities have made improvements in the following areas as the result of their participation in the Campaign:
 - a. the number of chronic and vulnerable homeless people housed per month
 - b. prioritization of chronic and vulnerable homeless people for housing
 - c. the total population of chronically homeless in the community
 - d. coordination among local partners
 - e. system integration and efficiency
3. Whether the retention rates of individuals placed into housing through the Campaign are comparable to the average retention rates of other Housing First initiatives.
4. The extent to which the tools, strategies and resources provided by Community Solutions and our partners have helped Campaign communities to prioritize the most vulnerable individuals for housing and to improve their housing placement systems. Some of the tools and resources were more helpful than others.

In addition to these required evaluation elements, Community Solutions would be interested in hearing how an outside evaluator might attempt to compare the baseline and/or current performance between campaign communities and non-campaign communities in the following areas:

- a. the number of chronic and vulnerable homeless people housed per month
- b. prioritization of chronic and vulnerable homeless people for housing
- c. the total population of chronically homeless in the community
- d. coordination among local partners
- e. system integration and efficiency

C. Evaluation Items and Data Sources

Community Solutions will provide performance data captured during the Campaign for the consultant to review and analyze, but we also expect the consultant to gather new sources of both quantitative and qualitative data to evaluate the success of the Campaign.

The chart below provides suggested data sources for evaluating the success of the campaign in each of the evaluation areas or items identified in Section B, above.

Item	Data Source(s)
1. Total chronic and vulnerable homeless individuals housed during the campaign	Monthly housing placement reports to the Campaign
2. Housing rates of chronic and vulnerable homeless individuals	- Monthly housing placement reports - Housing Management Information Systems (HMIS) queries (note that the campaign has a limited number of completed queries from campaign communities but could assist the evaluator in obtaining more)
3. Prioritization of chronic and vulnerable homeless individuals for housing	- Surveys and interviews - Community Self-Assessment Tool (SAT) data (note that SATs were completed between January 2012 and the present and in some cases, the responses may no longer be accurate) - HMIS Queries (note the Campaign has a limited number of completed queries from campaign communities but could assist the evaluator in obtaining more)
4. The total population of chronically homeless in the community	Point-in-time (PIT) data
5. Retention rates	HMIS Queries (note the Campaign has a limited number of completed queries from campaign communities but could assist the evaluator in obtaining more)
6. Coordination among local partners	Surveys and interviews
7. System integration and efficiency	- Surveys and interviews - VA processing time data - Community Self-Assessment Tool (SAT) data
8. Effectiveness of different Campaign tools and resources	Surveys and interviews

D. Proposal Guidelines

Proposals should be no more than 15 pages in length and must include the elements listed in the table below. Consultants may submit additional information in an appendix to the proposal. However, the appendix must be attached as a separate document, and Community Solutions will decide whether to consider the information during our assessment of the proposal. Community Solutions may request further information from applicants before making a final decision.

Note that Community Solutions will not be setting a budget limit for the evaluation at this time.

Proposal Elements	Page limit
1. Cover page with consultant(s) contact information	1 page
2. Narrative overview	1 page
3. Statement of firm qualifications, including information on recent evaluation projects similar to the proposed evaluation	2 pages
4. Names and qualifications of staff carrying out the evaluation	2 pages
5. Names and contact information of 3 professional references, and a brief description of consultant(s) experience working with or for the person referenced	2 pages
6. Description of proposed evaluation methods for each indicator and rationale for using proposed methods	3-4 pages
7. Work plan/timeline for collecting and analyzing the information	1-2 pages
8. Itemized cost proposal with the breakdown of costs for each evaluation item	1 page
9. Signature page, affirming that consultant(s) will adhere to the timeline described in Section E, below (see Attachment A).	1 page

E. Timeline and Deliverables

Community Solutions expects the selected consultant to provide the following deliverables as part of this project:

1. A final evaluation plan methods to be used (Community Solutions will work with you to revise and refine the plan submitted in response to this RFP)
2. An interim report on the evaluation of items 1 - 5

3. A final report that summarizes findings on all items, 1 - 8

These and other significant tasks and deadlines are described in the table below. Note that Community Solutions reserves the right to amend the timeline and deliverables and with whoever we select. Also note that Community Solutions will be open to changes requested to the final report deadlines, but it will be very difficult to accept changes requested to interim report deadlines.

Task/Activity	Deadline
Proposals due	February 28, 2014
Selection of consultant made and feedback provided	March 7, 2014
Work starts	March 17, 2014
Final draft submitted of plan and methodology for evaluating each item	March 21, 2014
Evaluation plan and methodology approved	March 28, 2014
Evaluation begins	March 31, 2014
1st draft of Interim Report submitted for items 1-5 (Reports on each item may be submitted as each is completed, but the deadline for all analyses is May 2, 2014)	April 28 - May 2, 2014
Feedback provided on 1st draft of Interim Report	May 9, 2014
2nd draft of Interim Report submitted	May 16, 2014
Feedback provided on 2nd draft	May 21, 2014
Deadline for Interim Report completion	May 30, 2014
1st draft of Final Report submitted for items 1-8 (Reports on the remaining items may be submitted as each is completed, but the deadline for the 1st draft of the report is August 1, 2014)	July 28 - August 1, 2014
Feedback provided on 1st draft of Final Report	August 8, 2014
2nd draft of Final Report submitted	August 15, 2014
Feedback provided on 2nd draft	August 22, 2014
Deadline for Final Report completion	August 29, 2014

F. Criteria for Selection

Proposals will be evaluated based upon the criteria listed below.

1. Capability and expertise of the consultant - 40%.
2. Evaluation methodologies proposed - 40%
3. Cost proposal - 20%