

Request for Proposals
Update of the Rhode Island
Ten Year Plan To End Homelessness

March 11, 2011

Rhode Island Housing, on behalf of the Rhode Island Continuum of Care, invites all interested and qualified firms to submit proposals to provide planning and consulting services to update the Rhode Island Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness (the “Ten Year Plan”) by responding to the changing environment and ensuring consistency with federal legislative changes.

INSTRUCTIONS:

One original, hard-copy of the proposals must be delivered to Rhode Island Housing, 44 Washington Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02903-1721, Attn: Laura Archambault, Supportive Services Manager no later than April 4, 2011 at 5:00 pm. In addition, an electronic copy of the proposal must be delivered to larchambault@rhodeislandhousing.org by the same time.

Your proposal should be no longer than eight (8) pages, excluding certifications, attachments and work samples. A two-page cover letter may accompany your proposal.

Respondents are advised that all submissions (including those not selected) may be made available to the public on request upon completion of the process and award of a contract.

Rhode Island Housing reserves the right to waive any irregularities and to reject any and all proposals on any basis without disclosing the reason.

BACKGROUND

In 2006, the Ten Year Plan was developed by various public and private entities involved in homelessness work in Rhode Island, including the Rhode Island Housing Resources Commission (“HRC”), the Governor’s Interagency Council on Homelessness (the “Interagency Council”) and service providers to the homeless. The Ten Year Plan was intended to guide the allocation and use of state and federal resources to address the problem of homelessness in Rhode Island, in a manner that was consistent with the federal efforts to end homelessness.

The Interagency Council was originally established by Executive Order in August 2007 to examine problems associated with homelessness and to develop and implement strategies and programs for assuring a coordinated, effective response to reduce homelessness in Rhode Island. The Interagency Council was made up of the Directors of all the key state agencies whose programs assist the homeless and was led by the Chair of the HRC. The current Ten Year Plan was approved by the Interagency Council on Homelessness in February of 2006 and can be found at the following link: <http://www.hrc.ri.gov/documents/HomelessPlan.DOC>.

The Executive Order establishing the Interagency Council expired in July 2009, but subsequently was reauthorized in February, 2011 by Governor Chafee.

The HRC was created in 1998 to be the state policy and planning agency for housing issues. Its mission is to provide housing opportunities for all Rhode Islanders, to maintain the quality of housing in Rhode Island, and to coordinate and make effective the housing opportunities of the agencies and subdivisions of the state. The HRC's Office of Homelessness and Emergency Assistance is responsible for coordinating the homeless system toward the goal of ending homelessness. HRC members represent every segment of the public and private sectors that have involvement or concern with homelessness in Rhode Island. It serves as the work group to implement the Governor's Interagency Council's Plan to End Homelessness and is charged with assuring a coordinated, effective response to reduce homelessness.

A number of state, local and private entities provide services to homeless persons under the broad umbrella of the Ten Year Plan. The Rhode Island Continuum of Care ("CoC"), which came out of the original Ten Year Plan process, is a statewide, coordinated body of service providers and state agency representatives who engage in planning and implementing programs designed to offer a full range of emergency, transitional and permanent housing, as well as other supportive services to address the needs of homeless persons. Rhode Island Housing provides operational and staffing support to the CoC, and submits the annual application for federal funding to the Department of Housing and Urban Development ("HUD"), administers the Supportive Housing Program ("SHP") and Shelter + Care program, and monitors recipients of funding under these programs. For the past several years the CoC has taken the lead in coordinating the state's efforts to address homelessness.

In addition to programs administered by the CoC, the Rhode Island Office of Housing and Community Development ("OHCD") administers the Consolidated Homeless Fund, which includes the federal Emergency Shelter Grant ("ESG") program and the federal Social Services Block Grant ("SSBG") program, as well as the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program ("HPRP"). Finally, there are entitlement communities in the state (Providence, Pawtucket and Woonsocket) that administer their own ESG and HPRP programs.

In 2009, the Homeless Emergency and Rapid Transition to Housing Act of 2009 (the "HEARTH Act") was enacted. The [HEARTH Act](#) amends and reauthorizes the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, and incorporates a number of substantial changes, including:

- A consolidation of HUD's competitive grant programs;
- The creation of a Rural Housing Stability Program;
- A change in HUD's definition of homelessness and chronic homelessness;
- A simplified match requirement;
- An increase in prevention resources; and,
- An increase in the emphasis on performance.

The McKinney Act, administered by HUD, authorizes most of the programs utilized by the CoC to address homelessness. As part of the HEARTH Act's increased emphasis on performance, HUD will particularly be focusing on the following outcomes and data:

- Length of time homeless
- Recidivism (subsequent return to homelessness)
- Access/coverage (thoroughness in reaching persons who are homeless)
- Overall reduction in number of persons who experience homelessness
- Job and income growth for persons who are homeless
- Reduction in first time homeless
- Other accomplishments related to reducing homelessness

Regulations implementing changes made in the HEARTH Act have not yet been released. For additional information on the HEARTH Act please visit the link below:

<http://www.hudhre.info/hearth>

In 2010, the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness released *Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness* (“Opening Doors”). Opening Doors is consistent with and incorporates the changes included in the HEARTH Act and lays out a roadmap for the approach the Federal Government is taking to ending homelessness. Opening Doors can be found at the link below:

http://www.ich.gov/PDF/OpeningDoors_2010_FSPPreventEndHomeless.pdf

SCOPE OF WORK

Given the significant changes in Rhode Island’s economic and housing market since the plan’s adoption, and statutory and changes described above, the CoC is embarking on a planning process to revise the Ten Year Plan to reflect the current environment.

As required by the HEARTH Act, the revised plan will:

- align with the State and Cities’ consolidated plans, housing authority plans and state agency plans
- align with the federal strategic plan to end homelessness
- expand the action steps for prevention and rapid re-housing
- include steps for coordination of mainstream services within the state
- identify outcomes to measure success and the indicators to do so

The intent of this request is to solicit proposals from offerors or organizations to contract with Rhode Island Housing, on behalf of the CoC, to work with the Office of Homelessness to:

1. Achieve shared understanding of the requirements of the HEARTH Act and the new federal direction with regard to homelessness laid out in *Opening Doors* and how they relate to the current 10-year plan.
2. Design a meaningful process of engagement of stakeholders in revising the 10-year plan which engages the broad range of partners needed including the Rhode Island Inter-Agency Council on Homelessness, takes advantage of the knowledge and experience of

the members of the Office of Homelessness, and can be efficiently and effectively implemented in a timely fashion.

3. Implement that process.
4. Rewrite the 10-year plan to incorporate the feedback generated by that engagement process, the expertise of the members of the Office of Homelessness and the requirements of the HEARTH Act and the recommendations of *Opening Doors*.

This work shall be designed and developed based on the input of the Office of Homelessness, the feedback received through the proposed public engagement process, and such additional research by the consultant that is needed to meet the requirements set forth in the Request for Proposals.

The selected consultant will be responsible for planning agendas and facilitating meetings of a subcommittee of the Office of Homelessness tasked with revising the 10-Year Plan, and other meetings required to design and implement the proposed engagement process. The consultant will be responsible for documenting and sharing with the subcommittee the results of all meetings and the engagement process. The consultant will assist members of the subcommittee in:

- Establishing and/or revising short and long-term goals and priorities to end homelessness for the next five years in alignment with the dictates of HEARTH Act and the needs of the State;
- Identifying systems change models and best practices;
- Identifying current homelessness plans of state agencies, entitlement communities, and others that need to be considered and be consistent with the revised Ten Year Plan.

At the completion of the planning process the consultant will be responsible for making approved revisions to the Ten Year Plan and presenting the plan in a format that is clear and concise. The completed product should include a Work Plan with appropriate time-lines, responsible parties, and performance outcomes that can be measured over time to determine effectiveness.

Respondents to this RFP should include their thoughts on the most effective process to use to engage partners and develop the plan and include suggestions of additional components that may be needed to implement that process. The final Scope of Work may vary based on the processes proposed and agreed to by the subcommittee.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

A. Professional

1. Describe your firm and its capabilities. In particular, support your capacity to perform the work that likely will be associated with this Scope of Services. Indicate which services you would perform in-house and which would require outside vendors.
2. Indicate which principals and associates from your firm would be involved in providing services. Provide appropriate background information (such as resumes) and identify their responsibilities.
3. Describe your firm's role in similar engagements, particularly those involving statewide planning organizations with diverse members.
4. Describe the knowledge and experience of your firm and/or staff in work related to homelessness programs and/or providers and familiarity with federal homelessness programs.
5. Describe your proposed approach, action plan, timeline and deliverable for each action.
6. Please include a current roster, including a lead contact name and telephone number of those organizations or businesses that you service.
7. At you option, provide other pertinent samples of your work.

B. Fee Structure

The cost of services is one of the factors that will be considered in awarding this contract. The information requested in this section is required to support the reasonableness of your fees.

1. Describe your proposed fee structure for this engagement. Please be as specific as possible.
2. Provide a breakdown of costs for each specific activity/task set forth in your proposed work plan.
3. Provide an itemized breakdown of billing rates and hourly costs, list of key personnel and their hourly rates, reimbursable expenses, etc.
4. Rhode Island Housing is open to alternative or fixed fee billing arrangements. Please feel free to propose such non-traditional fee structures.
5. Please provide any other fee information applicable to the engagement that has not been previously covered.

C. Miscellaneous

1. Rhode Island Housing encourages the participation of persons of color, women, persons with disabilities and members of other federally and State-protected classes. Describe your firm's affirmative action program and activities. Include the number and percentage of members of federally and state-protected classes who are either principals or senior managers in your firm, the number and percentage of members of federally and state-protected classes who will work on this engagement and, if applicable, a copy of your Minority- or Women-Owned Business Enterprise certification.
2. Discuss any topics not covered in this Request for Proposals that you would like to bring to Rhode Island Housing's attention.

D. Certifications

1. Rhode Island Housing insists upon full compliance with Chapter 27 of Title 17 of the Rhode Island General Laws, Reporting of Political Contributions by State Vendors. This law requires State Vendors entering into contracts to provide services to an agency such as Rhode Island Housing, for the aggregate sum of \$5,000 or more, to file an affidavit with the State Board of Elections concerning reportable political contributions. The affidavit must state whether the State Vendor (and any related parties as defined in the laws) has, within 24 months preceding the date of the contract, contributed an aggregate amount in excess of \$250 within a calendar year to general officer, any candidate for general office, or any political party.
2. Does any Rhode Island "Major State Decision-maker", as defined below, or the spouse or dependent child of such person, hold (i) a ten percent or greater equity interest, or (ii) a Five Thousand Dollar or greater cash interest in this business?

For purposes of this question, "Major State Decision-maker" means:

- (i) All general officers; and all executive or administrative head or heads of any state executive agency enumerated in R.I.G.L. 42-6-1 as well as the executive or administrative head or heads of state quasi-public corporations, whether appointed or serving as an employee. The phrase "executive or administrative head or heads" shall include anyone serving the positions of director, executive director, deputy director, assistant director, executive counsel or chief of staff;
- (ii) All members of the general assembly and the executive or administrative head or heads of a state legislative agency, whether appointed or serving as an employee. The phrase "executive or administrative head or heads" shall include anyone serving in the positions of director, executive director, deputy director, assistant director, executive counsel or chief of staff;
- (iii) All members of the state judiciary and all state magistrates and the executive or administrative head or heads of a state judicial agency, whether appointed or

serving as an employee. The phrase “executive or administrative head or heads” shall include anyone serving in the positions of director, executive director, deputy director, assistant director, executive counsel, chief of staff or state court administrator.

If your answer is “yes” please identify the Major State Decision-maker, specify the nature of their ownership interest, and provide a copy of the annual financial disclosure required to be filed with the Rhode Island Ethics Commission pursuant to R.I.F.L. §§ 36-14-16, 17 and 18.

3. Please include a letter from your president, chairman or CEO acknowledging that all work created under any contract awarded under this RFP (“Protected Works”) shall be deemed “work for hire” under the United States Copyright Act and owned exclusively by the Rhode Island Housing. To the extent any Protected Work cannot be deemed work for hire, you agree to assign to Rhode Island Housing all right, title, and interest in and to all Protected Works and all intellectual property rights in and to the Protected Works.
4. Please include a letter from your president, chairman or CEO certifying the (i) no member of your firm has made inquiries or contacts with respect to this Request for Proposals other than in an email or written communication to Laura Archambault, Supportive Services Manager, to seek clarification on the scope of work set forth in this proposal, from the date of this RFP through the date of the submittal of your proposal, (ii) no member of your firm will make any such inquiry or contact until May 20, 2011 (iii) all information in your proposal is true and correct to the best of her/his knowledge, (iv) no member of your firm gave anything of monetary value or promise of future employment to a Corporation employee or Commissioner, or a relative of the same, based on any understanding that such person’s action or judgment will be influenced and (v) your firm is in full compliance with Chapter 27 of Title 17 of the Rhode Island General Laws, Reporting of Political Contributions by State Vendors.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Applications submitted in response to this RFP will be reviewed by a subcommittee of the Office of Homelessness tasked with updating the Ten Year Plan. The subcommittee will evaluate all responsive proposals based on several factors including the following:

- Professional Capacity to undertake the work as set forth in this document in a timely fashion
- Quality of proposed approach
- Demonstrated knowledge of federal and state homelessness programs
- Demonstrated knowledge of and experience working with Rhode Island state agencies and social service providers
- Demonstrated experience in working with similar collaboratives and with homelessness programs and providers
- Cost competitiveness

- Recommendations and references
- Other pertinent information submitted

One or more finalists may be invited by the subcommittee to make a presentation. The recommendation of the subcommittee must be approved by the Coordinating Committee of the Office of Homelessness and by Rhode Island Housing.

By this RFP, Rhode Island Housing has not committed itself to undertake the work set forth. Rhode Island Housing reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, to rebid the original or amended scope of services and to enter into negotiations with one or more respondents. Rhode Island Housing reserves the right to make those decisions after receipt of responses. Rhode Island Housing's decision on these matters is final.