



**Request for Information
RFI No. 00001-13-14
City Of Columbia Homeless Services**

**Release Date: January 8, 2014
Time: 10:00 AM (EST)**

(Address)

IMPORTANT: This is a Request for Information (RFI) only and should not be construed as a Request for Proposal (RFP). The purpose of this solicitation is to gather information and may, or may not be used in a future Request for Proposal and/or Invitation for Bid. No cost and pricing data are requested nor should it be included with your response. This solicitation (RFI) will not result in a contract award. Responses should be submitted in a sealed envelope indicating the respondent's name and RFI number on the front of the envelope or package.

Deadline for all submittals: February 7, 2014 at 10:00 AM

Submit eight (8) original copies of your response and
One (1) CD to:
City of Columbia/Purchasing Division/ (Primary Contact)
Attn: RFI No. 00001-13-14
City Of Columbia Homeless Services
(Address)
Columbia, S.C. 29201

Requests for additional information and questions should be submitted to:
<https://bidonline.columbia.sc.gov/ifas7/bidonline/>
Using Bid Online, user must be logged in and under the Bid tab,
click "Bid Questions and Answers"

(Buyer Name here)

I certify that this is a response to an RFI and at the discretion of the City of Columbia; the information provided may be used in future oral and/or written deliberations in an effort to address homelessness and socioeconomic issues within the City.

Authorized Signature (Print)

Authorized Signature w/ Title

E-mail Address

I. INTRODUCTION

In an effort to address the multiplex challenges faced in reducing homelessness, the City of Columbia (hereinafter referred to as the “City”) solicits feedback and information from all interested parties to assist in the crafting of a comprehensive request for proposal for homeless services.

The primary goal for City officials is to find solutions to the diverse problems associated with homelessness and to strategically develop a comprehensive plan for support and assistance for individuals that are homeless and individuals or families facing significant economic hardships. The path forward should also encompass the far-reaching effects faced by local residents, citizens, businesses, etc. due to homelessness.

II. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Some of the goals and objectives for the Request for Information will be for all interested parties, including but not limited to, area residents, community leaders, healthcare professionals, local businesses, governmental entities, faith-based organizations, academicians, contractors for construction projects, etc., to collaboratively work together to find solutions to some of our pressing socioeconomic issues:

1. How do we address sustainability and scalability for each section of need in the response to poverty and homelessness in Columbia?
2. How do we effectuate collaboration?
3. How do we plan for present and future allocations in federal and local funding? The City desires to focus some available resources into areas that will lead to the systematic accomplishment of our goals for addressing homelessness and poverty response in light of current fiscal realities.
4. What should the priorities be for the time and money that the City will spend responding to this problem in relationship to time frames and success measurements?
5. How do we address the need for short and long-term housing as there is very little in Columbia? This area should include self-pay, assisted-pay, emergency housing, stabilization housing, transitional housing, rooming housing, and long-term housing. What are the numbers of rooms needed in each tranche and how do we attain them? Ideas *must* include private and public participation.

6. How do we register and triage those with mental health needs? This currently represents a large sector of our unresolved need. What planning and research capabilities are there for the various groups capable of assisting with for triage and placement options?
7. How do we register and triage Veterans who are not historically willing to participate in existing services?
8. How do we develop a comprehensive transportation system for those with emergency needs, poverty needs, and homelessness needs? What are the necessary routes, schedules and criteria? Should this be a separate system that is attached to the homeless services needed in the City?
9. How do we participate in and control the costs of the long-term, year round plan verses the current seasonal operation? What should be the role of the City in crafting the plan, establishing the goal, and ongoing stewardship?
10. How do we control people who are released onto the streets daily from existing programs? What are the ideas needed from the broad group of providers that help form some general parameters that can be included in the RFP?
11. How do we address sex offenders?
12. How do we develop an accountability protocol for providers and recipients that can respond to fluid provisions and circumstances within the varying seasonal challenges?
13. How do we identify the various populations that we are seeing on the streets today?
14. How do we address free riders on the system? This includes those who are funded to some extent as well as others who have been seduced by the "how to live homeless" culture now prevailing in Columbia.
15. How do we link components of service with the overall stated goals for poverty and homeless responses that can be sanctioned and supported by the city?

Focus Areas:

There are several areas which must also be addressed during daily operations while providing services to the homeless which includes, but not limited to:

- Housing
- Meal Services
- Case Management
- Employment
- Transportation

The City of Columbia encourages individuals with expertise in these areas to respond to this RFI and provide information on any current offerings and services you are capable of providing to assist in this collaborative community effort. **The City of Columbia STRONGLY suggests that entities partner together and submit a response using a strong lead entity and partners with experience in the areas of expertise that will lead to a strong comprehensive homeless services program.**

The City of Columbia City Council has adopted six primary Homeless Response Goals. These goals should be incorporated into all aspects of each submitted response. The Goals are:

- Coordinate the response to poverty with other agencies
- Bring humanity to the response to poverty
- Leverage the power of the community in responding to poverty
- Institutionalize accountability for providers
- Meet the unique needs of the individual in need
- Address downtown impacts

Any subsequent proposal released by the City must include an all-inclusive plan to assist men, women, families and women with children.

III. RESPONSE REQUIREMENTS

All RFI responses must be received **NO LATER THAN February 7, 2014 by 10:00 AM** Eastern Standard Time. The responses should be submitted to Bid Online, delivered or mailed to City of Columbia/(Primary Contact), Attn.: RFI No. 00001-13-14 City Of Columbia Homeless Services, (Address), Columbia, S.C. 29201

All submittals should be delivered in a sealed envelope clearly labeled "RFI No. 00001-13-14 City Of Columbia Homeless Services" on the outside of the packet.

The information requested shall be bound in a single document with a front and back cover. Submittals shall be limited to a minimum of 25 pages and maximum of 50 pages front and back, excluding covers. These sheets do not include cut sheets/spec sheets. Each page shall be typed in Calibri or Times New Roman in a 12 pt font size on standard 8 ½ x 11 paper. Each section shall be identified separately and in the order shown as listed below. All interested parties responding to this RFI shall provide eight (8) individually bound originals and one (1) digital copies on a CD in PDF format consisting of the following information:

Respondent's Profile, Relevant Experience and Qualifications

1. General overview
2. Address
3. Office Locations, if applicable

4. Website address
5. Number of employees or volunteers
6. Telephone number
7. Email address
8. Qualifications/experience
9. Primary service offerings
10. Additional Service offerings
11. Proposed partnering organization (see Exhibit A)

IV. PRE-SOLICITATION MEETING/PRE-SUBMITTAL CONFERENCE

An optional, non-mandatory pre-solicitation meeting/pre-submittal conference will be held at 2:00 PM on January 17, 2014 at the following location:

City of Columbia
Address Line 1
Address Line 2

V. SUBMITTAL FORMAT and INQUIRIES

All interested parties are strongly encouraged to submit your questions, comments or concerns regarding this RFI prior to the Pre-solicitation meeting. Please see Appendix B for the cover sheet to use for all inquiries and submittals. Your inquiries should be addressed "Homeless Services Questions for Pre-solicitation Meeting, Attn: (Primary Contact), City of Columbia, (Address), Columbia, SC 29201 or emailed to (Contact's email address)

No questions may be directed to or contacts made with the Mayor, other members of City Council, the City Manager, and other City staff not identified in this RFI as points of contacts during the period of time that this RFI is made public, except as otherwise provided for herein.

VI. TENTATIVE TIMELINE FOR RFI and RFP

January 8, 2014	Release date for RFI
January 17, 2014	Pre-Solicitation Meeting/Pre-Submittal Conference
January 8-22, 2014	Question & Answer Period
February 7, 2014	Final date to submit responses to RFI – due by 10:00AM
February 10-14, 2014	Review of Responses by City of Columbia
March 3, 2014	RFP Tentative Release date
March 17, 2014	Pre-proposal Conference – Time: TBD
April 4, 2014	RFP Submittals Due – Time: TBD
April 15, 2014	Tentative date for submission to City Council

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APPENDIX B: SUBMITTAL FORM - COVER SHEET

Project: Homeless Services for the City of Columbia

SUBMITTAL FORM

SUBMITTER'S IDENTIFICATION

Name:

FEIN/SS#:

Address:

Authorized Representative:

Telephone Numbers

Daytime:

After Hours

E-mail:

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TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Direct or Indirect Costs for Submittals

This RFI does not commit the City of Columbia to pay for direct or indirect costs incurred in the preparation or presentation of a response. All respondents will pay the direct or indirect costs incurred in preparing their proposals, making presentations, participating in interviews and for travel and accommodations.

Information Only

This request for information (RFI) is issued solely for information gathering and planning purposes. Participation in the RFI process is not a requirement for any subsequent competitive procurement, although the results of this RFI may be used to develop an RFP. The City reserves the right to refrain from issuing an RFP or any other formal solicitation document for this service. This RFI is not a formal solicitation and no contract will be awarded as a result.

Online Submittals

RFIs submitted online prior to the time of opening will be encrypted and kept unopened.

Right to Cancel Solicitation

RFIs may be cancelled prior to the time fixed for opening. Negligence on the part of the bidder in submitting the RFI confers no right for the withdrawal of the submittal after it has been opened.

Confidentiality

Unless otherwise required by law, and until the opening of the Request for Information (RFI), all information, materials and other documents submitted by a respondent shall not be released or made available to any person or entity except City representatives assisting in this procurement process. Unless required by law, proprietary or financial information submitted to the City by a respondent will not be disclosed if the respondent visibly marks each part of the proposal that the respondent considers confidential, financial or proprietary information with the word "Confidential."

Conflict of Interest

Respondents shall promptly notify the Contracts Administrator, in writing, by certified mail, of all potential conflicts of interest for any prospective business association, interest, or other circumstance, which may influence or appear to influence the respondent's judgment or quality of services being provided hereunder. Such written notification shall identify the prospective business association, interest, or circumstance, the nature of work that such a person may undertake, and request an opinion of the City as to whether the association, interest, or circumstance would, in the opinion of the City, constitute a conflict of interest. The City will respond to such notification by certified mail within thirty (30) days. By submitting this

proposal, the respondent certifies that it has no conflict of interest with any employee, agent, elected official or officer of the city or any other conflict as may be set forth herein.

No direct or indirect contact with the mayor of the City of Columbia or City of Columbia Council members will be allowed. If such contact is made, the city reserves the right to reject the submittal.

Ethics

Vendor is subject to the provisions of the 1991 Ethics Reform Act (8-13-100, et seq. South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, as amended). Under this Act, City employees are prohibited from accepting anything of value from any person. "Anything of value" includes, but is not limited to, lodging, transportation, entertainment, food, meals, beverages, money, gifts, honorariums, discounts and interest-free loans.

Non-Discrimination

All respondents will take affirmative action in complying with all federal, state and local requirements concerning fair employment and employment of the handicapped, and concerning the treatment of all employees, without regard or discrimination by reason of race, color, religion, sex, national origin or physical handicap.

Ownership of Data/Information

All data and other information generated by or used by the respondent in any form whatsoever, is the property of the City and shall not be used by the respondent for any purpose whatsoever except to perform the requested service.

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