



Winston-Salem

Request for Proposals

Title: Consultant to Facilitate Coordinated Entry Improvement Process

PROPOSALS WILL BE RECEIVED UNTIL

12:00 Noon, Thursday, August 17, 2017

in

**Purchasing Department, City Hall Building
101 North Main Street, Suite 324 Winston-Salem, NC 27101**

ADVERTISEMENT FOR PROPOSALS

Sealed proposals endorsed **Consultant to Facilitate Coordinated Entry Improvement Process** for the City of Winston-Salem will be received by the City/County Purchasing Department in Suite 324, City Hall Building, 101 North Main Street, Winston-Salem, NC, **until the date and time listed above**. Instructions for submitting proposals and/or receiving the complete RFP document specifications may be obtained during regular office hours at the same location, or by contacting Jerry Bates via email jerryjb@cityofws.org (Email is preferred) or phone 336-747-6939. The City reserves the right to reject any or all proposals.

Jerry Bates
Purchasing Director

This document IS NOT the complete proposal. To obtain the completed proposal specifications contact Jerry Bates via email jerryjb@cityofws.org, by phone 336-747-6939, or visit the Purchasing Department, City Hall Building, Suite 324, 101 North Main Street, Winston-Salem, NC during regular office hours.

INSTRUCTIONS TO PROPOSERS

INTRODUCTION:

This entire set of documents constitutes the RFP. The proposer must return the RFP with all information necessary to properly analyze the proposer's response in full, in the same numerical order in which it was issued. Proposer's notes, exceptions, and comments may be rendered on an attachment, provided the same format of this RFP text is followed. **All proposals shall be returned in a sealed container/envelope marked "Consultant to Facilitate Coordinated Entry Improvement Process",** and submitted to the City/County Purchasing Department in Suite 324, City Hall Building, 101 North Main Street, Winston-Salem, NC, no later than **the date and time listed on page 1 above.** **Late proposals will not be considered.**

Proposer Questions and Inquiries

Proposer Questions and Inquiries relative to this RFP must be submitted **in writing only by 12:00 Noon, Tuesday, August 8, 2017,** to Jerry Bates, City/County Purchasing Director, 101 North Main Street, Winston-Salem, NC 27101 or e-mail: jerryjb@cityofws.org (**Email is preferred**), Fax: (336) 727-2443. The City will provide written responses to all inquiries received by this date, and responses will be made available to all recipients of this RFP. Any oral responses made by any representative of the City may not be relied upon. Any supplements or amendments to this RFP will be in writing and furnished to potential bidders.

RFP Response Submission

Proposals must be submitted in a **sealed container/ opaque envelope** containing **one original (please mark document as original)** proposal showing original signatures and seals, **and three (3) copies** of the complete proposal.

The City will not be obligated for the expenses of any provider arising out of preparation and/or submittal of responses to this RFP. Any and all proposals to this RFP are to be prepared at the cost and expense of the respondents, with the express understanding that there may be no claims whatsoever for the reimbursement of any costs, damages, or expenses relating to this procurement from the City or any other party for any reason (including the cancellation of this RFP).

Proposals must be made in the official name of the individual, firm, or corporation under which the business is conducted (showing official business address) and must be signed in ink by a person duly authorized to legally bind the business entity submitting the proposal.

All proposals should be complete and carefully worded and must convey all of the information requested by the City. If errors or exceptions are found in the proposal, or if the proposal fails to conform to the requirements of the RFP, the City will be the sole judge as to whether that variance is significant enough to reject the proposal.

Proposals should be prepared simply and economically. All data, materials, and documentation shall be available in a clear, concise form. The City reserves the right to reproduce proposals for internal use in the evaluation process.

Proposers are expressly forbidden from contacting any other city employee or city of Winston-Salem elected official regarding this Request for Proposals. Any such outside contact may result in disqualification from the request for proposal process.

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Background and Scope of Work For Coordinated Entry Planning Services

The City of Winston-Salem seeks proposals for a Consultant to facilitate a planning process to develop policies and procedures for coordinated entry of homeless persons into local programs.

I. Background

The City of Winston-Salem receives funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to address homelessness through programs providing housing and services. The majority of the funds are passed through to local agencies which are among those organizations and persons comprising a “Continuum of Care” of services to homeless citizens of Winston-Salem and Forsyth County, North Carolina.

The City, County, service agencies, and other interested parties participate in a planning body called the “Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Continuum of Care” (CoC). The CoC meets monthly and has over 40 member agencies. The City, with additional staff support from United Way, provides leadership and administrative support to the CoC.

HUD requires that each community’s CoC system include a “coordinated entry” (CE) component. The main purpose of CE is to prioritize local program resources to homeless persons based on need. The current CE function is administered by United Way of Forsyth County in the form of a Community Intake Center (“CIC”). CIC is funded by HUD CoC grants and HUD Community Development Block Grant funds through the City. CIC has been operating since 2013, under the oversight of the CoC.

For several reasons, this is an opportune time to update CE policies and procedures for the CoC. The Business Plan which comprises the policies and procedures for the CIC is outdated. Also, the body that approved the Business Plan and which was designated to oversee it, has been replaced by a new governance structure for the CoC. Most importantly, HUD has published new requirements for CE for which the City must certify compliance by January 23, 2018. Local agencies have requested to have input into the planning and implementation process to improve CE. For these reasons, consulting services are being requested to develop a project plan and timeline which will facilitate an inclusive process to develop or update CE policies and procedures and meet HUD’s requirements.

Assistance is needed to complete the following tasks associated with the Coordinated Entry System (CES):

- A. Ensure a basis for a common understanding of CES concepts throughout the CoC
- B. Determine the extent to which intake and assessment are to be centralized or more broadly coordinated
- C. Develop required written policies and procedures for providing access to the CES, completing the standardized assessment process, prioritizing households for housing, making referrals to participating projects and meeting all HUD requirements
- D. Develop written policies, procedures and standards for evaluating individuals' and families' eligibility for services and prioritizing households to receive a particular level of housing or prevention service
- E. Determine participation in review of the By-Name List (BNL) of homeless persons and participation in review of information on specific openings in housing programs and how case conferencing will be used in the CES
- F. Ensure effective implementation of CES by January 23, 2018

The CES must:

- A. Cover the entire CoC geographic area;
- B. Be well-advertised;
- C. Be easily accessed by individuals and families seeking housing and/or services;
- D. Include a comprehensive and standardized assessment tool;
- E. Prioritize homeless households with the greatest need(s);
- F. Provide an initial, comprehensive assessment of individuals and families for housing and services; and
- G. Include a specific policy to guide the operation of the CES to address the needs of individuals and families who are fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, but who are seeking shelter or services from non-victim specific providers.

Materials that inform the release of this RFP and which should guide the development of any proposal are available at www.hudexchange.info and include:

1. [CPD-17-01: Notice Establishing Additional Requirements for a Continuum of Care Centralized or Coordinated Assessment System](#)
2. [Coordinated Entry Policy Brief](#)
3. [Coordinated Entry Core Elements Guidebook](#)
4. [Coordinated Entry Self-Assessment](#)

II. General Scope of Work

The general scope of work includes:

1. Review and become familiar with HUD requirements for Coordinated Entry (CE) as described in *CPD-17-01: Notice Establishing Additional Requirements for a Continuum of Care Centralized or Coordinated Assessment System and the supplementary materials listed above*;
2. Develop a project plan and timeline to have CE policies and procedures in place by November 30, 2017 which meet HUD's requirements;
3. Design and conduct a process with City representatives and other local agency representatives designated by the City or CoC to complete the project plan;
4. Facilitate planning group meetings, including development of ground rules or working agreements for interactions in meetings;
5. Provide guidance on development of materials used to focus discussion of plan elements;
6. Record key decisions made in meetings and report in writing to the City and the planning group;
7. As needed, conduct interviews and consultations with key individual agencies and stakeholders;
8. Provide technical assistance on development of written CE Policies and Procedures;
9. Facilitate a process to ensure that all written policies, procedures and related materials such as flow charts represent planning group decisions and compliance with HUD's requirements for CE
10. Upon request of the City, attend CoC meetings where policies and procedures are to be discussed or approved

A more detailed scope of work follows under Roles and Responsibilities.

III. Roles and Responsibilities

Designated staff of the City's Community Development Department will be the point of contact for the Consultant. A Planning Group designated by the Continuum of Care's Operating Cabinet will be the workgroup for this project. The Consultant will facilitate the Planning Group meetings and draft policies and procedures for the CES.

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Detailed Tasks of Consultant:

Preliminary Tasks
<p>1.1 Develop a comprehensive inventory of stakeholder organizations that will be part of planning and/or implementation of the CoC’s CES. The inventory should include the Planning Group and all program resources available to persons experiencing a housing crisis, which may include but not be limited to Homeless Prevention, Homelessness Diversion, Street Outreach, Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, Rapid Rehousing and Permanent Supportive Housing.</p>
Access
<p>2.1 Develop written policies and procedures that describe the relationship of the CoC(s) and its members to the coordinated entry process, addressing at a minimum how the core elements of ensuring access, standardizing assessments, and implementing uniform referrals will operate throughout the CoC and how the CES will be overseen and managed. Include policies and procedures describing which agencies may refer clients to the CES and how it will be done.</p>
<p>2.2 Develop written policies and procedures that detail a process by which unsheltered persons experiencing a housing crisis are prioritized for assistance in the same manner as any other homeless person who accesses and is assessed through coordinated entry.</p>
<p>2.3 Develop written policies and procedures that document how persons are ensured access to emergency shelter and services, including referrals during hours when coordinated entry’s intake and assessment processes may not be operating. Additionally, written policies and procedures must describe the process by which persons will be prioritized for referrals to any homelessness prevention services funded by the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Program.</p>
<p>2.4 Develop written policies and procedures for selection of clients for assessment.</p>
<p>2.5 Develop written policies and procedures that detail the CoC’s standardized intake and assessment process, including documentation of the criteria used for uniform decision-making across access points and across agencies and staff conducting intake or assessments. The CES process may, but is not required to have separate access points and variations in assessment processes to the extent necessary to meet the needs of the following five populations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Adults without Children b) Adults accompanied by children c) Unaccompanied youth d) Households fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions (including human trafficking) e) Persons at imminent risk of literal homelessness, for purposes of administering Emergency Solutions Grant-funded homelessness prevention assistance, if any. <p>The written policies and procedures must describe any variation in access points or assessment processes for these populations.</p>
<p>2.6 Develop written policies and procedures that include guidelines for how the CoC will ensure that all populations and subpopulations in the CoC’s geographic area have non-discriminatory access to the coordinated entry process. This applies to all persons to be served by the CES, including but not limited to people experiencing chronic homelessness, veterans, adults with children, youth, and survivors of domestic violence, and regardless of the location or method by which they access the crisis response system. Written policies and procedures must also document steps, such as marketing and outreach, which are taken to ensure that access points are accessible to people with disabilities. These policies and procedures must include affirmative efforts to engage with persons in the CoC who</p>

are least likely to seek homeless system assistance, including but not limited to youth, refugees and the LGBTQ population.
2.7 Develop written policies and procedures that establish protocols that ensure at a minimum that people fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence have safe and confidential access to coordinated entry and that data collection conforms to the applicable requirements of the Violence Against Women Act, CoC Program, and/or HMIS Data Standards. Written policies and procedures must also describe the CoC’s protocol for extending coordinated entry safety planning and protections to victims of domestic violence who are staying at non-victim service provider projects. In addition, written policies and procedures for coordinated entry must include protocols that ensure at a minimum that people fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence and victims of trafficking have safe and confidential access to the coordinated entry process and victim services, including access to any comparable process used by victim service providers, as applicable, and immediate access to emergency services such as domestic violence hotlines and shelters.
2.8 Develop written policies and procedures that include protocols for obtaining participant consent to share information for purposes of assessing and referring participants through the coordinated entry process. Written policies and procedures must also ensure participants can freely abstain from disclosing and sharing information without fear of denial of services resulting from the refusal.
2.9 Evaluate current CES access points and determine if they should be maintained, merged or expanded. Work with the Planning Group to determine the best coordinated entry access model and provide a written plan that describes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) How street outreach teams will interface with the access points of the model selected for implementation b) The staffing levels needed to meet anticipated demand for access to the CoC’s coordinated entry and assessment processes c) The supervision and feedback loop with which CES staff will be supervised and monitored d) A map or flowchart of the ideal flow and volume of how persons will access and use the CoC’s crisis response services, including the flow for the CES e) A communications plan to share information about the access points with stakeholders, providers, community referral sources, and people experiencing a housing crisis who are likely to seek crisis response services from the CoC f) Documentation of the operational and programmatic practices of the access points
2.10 Develop written policies and procedures comprising protocols for the review, update and maintenance of the By-Name List (BNL) of homeless persons, including what parties shall have access to the BNL and when and how it will be used. The policies and procedures should also address the technology by which the BNL is stored and shared (google sheets or other method). Develop written policies and procedures describing how information on available housing program resources will be shared and used to assist persons on the BNL. Develop written protocols for how the BNL will be used to prioritize and select participants for referral to the Rapid Re-housing Program and the Permanent Supportive Housing Program. For purposes of this project, the BNL and “prioritized list” shall be synonymous. Although Veterans will be eligible for participation in the CES, a separate prioritized list may also be maintained for Veteran-specific services such as SSVF and VASH, which shall not be an element of the scope of work under this RFP.
2.11 Develop written policies and procedures designed to keep each participant’s time on the BNL or prioritized list at 60 days or less, including policies and procedures for seeking non-HUD-funded housing resources. Policies should include strategies to move Rapid Re-housing and Permanent Supportive Housing participants out of those programs and into other permanent housing when they no longer need intensive services. Policies should include criteria for determining when an assessed client is inactive for purposes of additional referral or eligibility determination through the CES.
Assessment
3.1 Develop written policies and procedures that detail the standardized assessment process, including documentation of the criteria used for uniform decision-making across access points and staff. Include

<p>policies and procedures on how clients are selected for assessment. If the Planning Group recommends separate access points and assessment tools for any of the five HUD-designated subpopulations (see item 2.4 above), written policies and procedures must document the process for uniform decision-making processes across the subpopulations.</p>
<p>3.2 Develop written policies and procedures that outline a process whereby necessary information may be obtained and shared when a person being assessed refuses to answer one or more assessment questions. Develop a written policy and procedure for tracking persons on the By-Name List for whom a complete assessment may not have been done. Include policies and procedures for obtaining information necessary for assessment and referral, such as chronic homeless status. Procedures should indicate the party who will be responsible for obtaining necessary information or documentation if it will be done as part of the CES process.</p>
<p>3.3 Develop written training protocols, including annual refresher training for any organizations that serve as access points or otherwise conduct assessments. The training protocols must include procedures to ensure that all assessors have access to all needed written or otherwise published training and assessment materials. The training protocols must include the requirements for prioritization and the criteria for uniform decision-making and referrals. The training protocols should include a regular frequency for appropriate cultural and linguistic training for participating CES agencies.</p>
<p>3.4 Develop written policies and procedures about when and where CES written policies and procedures shall be published and available to all CoC members and the public.</p>
<p>3.5 Develop recommendations for which agency or agencies within the CoC are best positioned to conduct assessments. Where assessment occurs in phases, one agency potentially could conduct the assessments across all phases, or a host of agencies could participate to varying degrees with each phase. Provide a map or flow chart of the recommended process.</p>
<p>3.6 Provide written recommendations for CES staff qualifications, education, and experience for staff undertaking the main duties of CES administration and operation.</p>
<p>3.7 Develop a recommended annual operating budget for the CES that considers costs for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Staffing b) Assessment tools c) Data management d) Other operational costs e) Training of CES staff and partners f) Evaluation and reporting
<p>3.8 Develop a written policy and procedure for selection and use of the comprehensive and standardized assessment tool, including at least annual review and evaluation of the effectiveness of the tool, which includes feedback from all stakeholders participating in the assessment process.</p>
<p>Prioritization</p>
<p>4.1 Develop written policies and procedures that govern prioritization processes, including the process by which prioritization decisions will be made for each project type (e.g., PSH, RRH) and the criteria used for prioritization decisions.</p>
<p>4.2 Develop a written appeals policy for CES decisions for persons not selected for assessment or not referred for program participation.</p>
<p>Referral</p>
<p>5.1 Develop written policies and procedures that document the uniform referral process for all participating projects, including allowable entry requirements and protocol for a project rejecting a referral. Include policies and procedures describing which agencies will accept referrals from the CES, the programs or activities for which they will accept referrals, and how it will be done.</p>
<p>5.2 Establish a written plan for referral data management and tracking that includes protocols with which sharing of data and information will occur across organization during the CE process.</p>
<p>5.3 Establish a recommended timeline for full CES implementation throughout the CoC.</p>

5.4 For persons found to be ineligible after referral, develop a written policy and procedure for such persons to retain priority on the priority list while other service and housing options are explored; include a protocol for when such cases may be re-assessed.

Evaluation

6.1 Develop a written policy to ensure at least annual evaluation of the CES by the CoC Operating Cabinet, which shall include a method of gathering and reporting feedback from stakeholders and participants.

IV. Submission Requirements

Proposals must include:

1. The Consultant's name, mailing address, email address, and telephone numbers.
2. A narrative and any other materials necessary to address the requirements of the scope of work.
3. A statement of the approach and methods to be used by the consultant to address the project as described.
4. A proposed timeline for completing the project, including key benchmark steps and events in the process;
5. A list of all of the persons (including the principal and any employees or subcontractors) to be involved in carrying out the proposed work, describing each person's qualifications and proposed involvement in specific tasks. Attach a resume for each person.
6. The proposed contract amount and a proposed payment schedule, including detailed work hours and pricing related to the scope of work, including the cost basis for all activities.
7. A list of all other work and projects to which the Consultant anticipates to be committed during the period of performance.
8. A list and description of similar work completed in the last five years, including a description of any work involving multiple entities and community collaborations. Dates should be indicated for all items.
9. Contact information for references from at least two organizations for which work similar to that proposed has been done, including the reference's name, organization, telephone number and email address.
10. A copy of a study or other document which illustrates the Consultant's writing style and ability.
11. Any additional information or materials relevant to the Consultant's availability, qualifications and capacity to do the work.
12. Authorization for the City to verify references.

V. Qualifications and Preferences

1. Availability of and proficiency in using Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Adobe Acrobat/Reader, Internet browser, and email.
2. Demonstrated ability to organize and facilitate group processes.
3. Demonstrated experience in human resource and human relations work.
4. Demonstrated writing ability, particularly in developing and writing policies and procedures
5. Familiarity with Winston-Salem/Forsyth County and its homeless service agencies is preferred.
6. Ability to start work upon execution of a contract with the City and to plan and arrange a necessary schedule of group meetings to get the work done.
7. Availability and commitment to attend all required meetings and meet all deadlines.
8. The City of Winston-Salem is committed to spending funds within the local economy and when possible, with local Minority/Woman Business Enterprise (M/WBE) businesses. Local vendors are defined as any business with a physical address location (not including Post Office boxes) within the corporate limits of Winston-Salem.

9. The City of Winston-Salem does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, age, national origin, religion, or disability in its employment opportunities, programs, or service.

VI. Review and Selection Process

The proposal submitted will be the primary source of information used in the evaluation process. The City will review all proposals against the qualifications, preferences, submission requirements and scope of work described in this RFP. For any proposal to be deemed responsive, the Consultant must provide appropriate detail to demonstrate satisfaction of each criterion and compliance with the performance provisions outlined in this RFP. Proposals must contain information specifically related to the services requested herein. Failure to submit information requested may eliminate the proposal from further evaluation.

Proposals will be assessed to determine the most comprehensive, competitive and best value solution for the City. Criteria used and estimated rating points available, shall be based on, but not limited to, the criteria described herein, which are summarized below by major category:

- Experience, Skills, Capacity and Availability (50%)
- Proposed Approach and Methodology (20%)
- Responsiveness, Cost Effectiveness and Value (30%)

The City may utilize a local panel to review proposals and recommend a selection. The City reserves the right to modify the evaluation criteria or waive portions thereof. Interviews may be requested with potential consultants prior to selection.

VII. Timeline

The City and Consultant will negotiate mutually agreeable timelines for commencement and completion of the project, as well as for scheduling of specific tasks. It is anticipated that the Consultant will be selected by **August 31, 2017**. The target for completion of the work, including presentations to the Continuum of Care, is **November 30, 2017**.

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