



REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

**Professional Consulting Services for Development of
Five-Year Consolidated Plan
&
Assessment of Fair Housing**

August 2019

Issued By:

City of Fargo, North Dakota
225 4th Street N.
Fargo, ND 58102

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Project Overview

Purpose

The City of Fargo, North Dakota is seeking consulting services for the development of: 1) Five-Year Consolidated Plan (2020-2024) including first year Annual Action Plan (2020 AAP), and 2) Assessment of Fair Housing. Qualifications may be submitted for either item or both, with subcontracting as an option (e.g., teams may be developed with multiple consultants if necessary). Submittals should highlight both the Consultant's capability to develop a Five-Year Consolidated Plan, in collaboration with the community's vision and input, and its methods to identifying goals and strategies for housing and community development in Fargo. Increasing opportunities for low to moderate income individuals is the primary goal of HUD-funded work, with focus on decent and affordable housing, suitable living environments, and economic opportunities.

Qualified consultant(s) will have expertise and understanding of consolidated plan development requirements as set forth by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnerships programs. Fair housing, equity, and inclusion goals are expected to be incorporated throughout the Consolidated Plan. Not only will stated goals meet basic HUD requirements, but also closely align with those of the Planning & Development Department and the following City commissions: Human Relations, Native American, Art & Culture, and Community Development. Staff will assist and guide as necessary to outline Departmental and Commission-related goals and to complete the Consolidated Plan, 2020 Action Plan, & Assessment of Fair Housing.

Background

Fargo is part of a metropolitan statistical area with a population of 232,660 and is the most populous city in North Dakota. Fargo serves as a regional economic hub for the Upper Midwest with a robust and diverse economy having specific strengths in the medical, agricultural, education, entrepreneurial, and retail industries. The City of Fargo has seen continual growth and development, which has only accelerated in recent years. Over the past 20 years, Fargo has increased in area and population by roughly one-third, and has more than doubled in both area and population since 1980. The community has continually been recognized among the best places in the country to live, work, attend school, and conduct business.

For over 40 years, Fargo has been designated as a HUD Entitlement Community within HUD Region VIII. In the past five years, the City's CDBG allocation from HUD has ranged from \$637,010 to \$760,323 per year; the HOME allocation has ranged from \$336,586 to \$479,938. The Consolidated Plan identifies the City's housing and community development needs and outlines strategies for addressing those needs. As an Entitlement Community, the City is required to prepare and adopt a five-year Con Plan no later than 45 days prior to the start of the Program Year (May 1 – Apr 30). In addition to citizen and organizational outreach for the needs assessment and market analysis sections of the plan, the timeline also includes one public meeting during the outreach period.

See Appendix B: "Resources for Preparing Consolidated Plan and Assessment of Fair Housing"

Selection Schedule

The City reserves the right to modify the timeline if necessary.

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|--|---|
| RFQ Released | August 5 2019 |
| Questions Due | August 12, 2019 (By 12 PM Central Time) |
| Response to Questions issued by City (if any received) | August 16, 2019 (By 12 PM Central Time) |
| Qualifications Due | August 23, 2019 (By 12 PM Central Time) |
| Interviews or phone consultation | August 28-30, 2019 |
| Consultant selection and contract | September 9, 2019 (City Commission meeting) |
| Begin Work | October 1, 2019 |

Required Project Schedule

The City has a coordinated schedule established with the regional HUD office. In order to meet the timeline, the following steps and corresponding schedule must be met.

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|---|------------------|
| City of Fargo Public Meeting | October 2019 |
| Outreach and Surveys Completed and Analyzed | November 2019 |
| Activities & Budget Finalized | November 2019 |
| Draft Plan (IDIS Compatible) Complete | December 2019 |
| Draft Assessment of Fair Housing Complete | December 2019 |
| Community Development Committee Meeting (Seeking approval of 2020 activities and budgets, and 5-year Consolidated plan draft) | January 21, 2020 |

Scope of Work Elements

Following are the Scope of Work elements required:

- Project Management – The Consultant(s) will take the lead in managing their time, staff, resources, budget, and related activities to ensure that the project objectives are met. The Consultant will be in close communication with staff throughout the development of the plan(s). Staff will provide general oversight of the Consultant(s) and will help to facilitate interactions with the citizens and project stakeholders.
- Data Collection and Statistical Analysis – The Consultant(s) will perform all data collection and statistical analysis (i.e., demographic, income, employment, housing, mortgage lending, etc.) necessary to meet HUD requirements , including:
 - A comprehensive review of the jurisdiction’s laws, regulations, and administrative policies, procedures, and practices;
 - An assessment of how the laws, regulations, and administrative policies, procedures, and practices affect the location, availability, and accessibility of housing; and
 - An assessment of conditions, both public and private, affecting fair housing choice for protected classes.
- Public & Stakeholder Participation – The Consultant(s) will work with City staff to develop a strategy to coordinate both general public input and consultation with CDBG stakeholders, public and private entities that provide services to low- and moderate-income (LMI) persons,

and presumed benefit populations. The City will provide a list of potential stakeholders as a reference to the Consultant(s).

- Development of Goals and Objectives – The Consultant(s) will assist in the development of appropriate goals and objectives, including identification of any local impediments to fair housing choice and recommendations for action. The Consultant(s) will also provide peer review of corresponding Action Plan Activities for coordination with the Consolidated Plan.
- Draft documents – The Consultant(s) will draft HUD-compliant (and IDIS compatible) documents for adoption by City Commission.

The selected Consultant(s) will collaborate with City staff to develop a final scope of work and schedule that will result in final drafts of the Consolidated Plan and Assessment of Fair Housing no later than December 2019. Public involvement is a required key component of this process. The Consultant(s) will develop a strategy for public and stakeholder participation in the project. The Consultant(s) will manage content and timing related to public meetings, focus groups, etc. City staff can provide assistance with scheduling and set-up.

Anticipated Project Deliverables

The project will result in the following primary deliverables. Additional intermediary deliverables may be identified by the Consultant(s) and/or City as the scope of work is finalized.

- Development of 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan, includes needs assessment and market analysis covering housing, homelessness, special needs, non-housing community development assets
- 2020 Action Plan (embedded in the Consolidated Plan)
- Development of the Assessment of Fair Housing

Submission Requirements

Content & Sequence

The content and sequence of the information contained in each copy of qualifications shall be as follows:

- A. Cover Letter

Include your firm's understanding of the work to be performed within the terms and conditions set forth in this RFQ. In addition, state why your firm believes it to be the best qualified to perform the services requested, including features, skills or services which distinguish your firm and make it the better choice for the City. The RFQ cover letter must be signed by an officer of the Consultant(s) or a designated agent empowered to bind the firm in the contract offer. (Keep response to one page.)
- B. Contact Summary Sheet

Complete this section and include with submittal (Appendix A).
- C. Understanding of Scope of Work and Calendar

Provide a brief statement confirming the Consultant's approach to this scope of work and ability to commit to the work schedule as suggested in this RFQ. Express your understanding of the City's needs, outcomes, deliverables, and the scope of work elements outlined within this RFQ.

Identify if the submittal addresses scope item #1 (Consolidated Plan/2020 Action Plan) or scope item #2 (Assessment of Fair Housing) or both.

D. References

List all of the municipal or state governments that your firm has worked for or with in a similar capacity to the work outlined within this RFQ. List names of organizations, names, telephone numbers, and email addresses of persons who can be contacted with regard to the services you have provided.

E. Project Team Information & Qualifications

List the proposed principal(s) who will be responsible for the work, proposed project manager, and project team members and provide relevant background information for each (e.g., education, professional experience, certifications, etc.)

F. Cost

The City wishes to know the estimated total costs, with an hourly fee. All cost quotations must include fees, travel/per diem/documentation costs, etc.

G. Work Samples

Provide 2-3 work product examples showcasing relevant experience, along with key contacts and phone numbers for the client, and a brief description of each project.

Submission of Qualifications

Consultants are to submit five (5) hard copies of their qualifications in accordance with the requirements set forth within this RFQ. In addition, an electronic version of qualifications shall be provided on a Flash Drive and/or uploaded to the City's digital file transfer site:

<http://transfer.fargond.gov/index.php/s/LddFsrKHCiBokZz>

The information included should be as concise as possible. Qualifications should generally be printed on 8 ½" x 11" paper, but pages with organizational charts, matrices, or diagrams may be printed on larger sheets. Document pages should be numbered. Type size should be no smaller than 11 points for narrative sections, but may be reduced for captions, footnotes, etc. as required while still maintaining legibility. **Qualifications are due by 12 pm Central on August 23, 2019.** Qualifications received later than the time and date specified will not be considered. The submittal should be titled, "**Qualifications for Professional Consulting Services for Five-Year Consolidated Plan and Assessment of Fair Housing for the City of Fargo**" and may be emailed, mailed, or delivered in person to:

planning@fargond.gov

City of Fargo
Planning & Development
City Hall – 2nd Floor
225 4 St N
Fargo, ND 58103

Communications

This Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is available to download at the City's website: www.FargoND.gov/BidPostings. Any addendum made to this Request for Qualifications will be posted at the same website used for downloading the RFQ.

All questions related to this RFQ must be submitted in writing or by email to the project contact, Tia Braseth, at TBraseth@FargoND.gov. **Questions may be submitted until 12 pm Central on August 12, 2019.** Responses to questions will be posted on the same webpage as this RFQ (<http://fargond.gov/work/bids-rfqs-rfps>). Questions received after the deadline for questions will not be answered.

For technical issues, consultants can dial (701) 476-4144 for assistance. Office hours are 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, excluding holidays.

Evaluation, Selection, & Contract Award

Evaluation & Selection Process

Qualifications will first be reviewed for completeness. Only those qualifications that are properly completed and meet the minimum content requirements will be considered in the evaluation process. Complete qualifications will then be evaluated and scored by an evaluation committee.

The evaluation committee may choose a limited number of qualifications for further consideration and to interview these firms. Notification of these consultants will be made as soon as possible, but the Consultant's team should be prepared to convene in Fargo for these interviews.

Qualifications will be evaluated based on the following general criteria:

- Understanding of Work Program and Deliverables: Understanding of the project scope and objectives; quality of response
- Communications: Organization/completeness of response; writing skills, as shown through the submission and any submitted work samples
- References and Work Product Examples: Confirmation that Consultant(s) have performed similar work in the past; assessment of ability to produce quality product within the project schedule; assessment of ability to conduct productive meetings; assessment of ability to work with staff, stakeholders, and elected officials; quality and applicability of submitted work examples
- Demonstrated Capacity: Past performance of Consultant(s) firm on similar projects; expertise and experience of project manager and team members; current workload and availability of Consultant(s) team members

The City reserves the right to reject any/all qualifications or accept what is, in its judgment, qualifications that are in the City's best interest. The City further reserves the right, in the best interests of the City, to waive any technical defects or irregularities in any/all qualifications submitted.

The City may request additional information from consultants during the selection process. Additionally, discussion may be conducted with consultants to assure full understanding of, and responsiveness to, the requirements of this RFQ.

Contract Award

The City will select a consultant with whom City staff shall commence contract negotiations. If a satisfactory contract cannot be negotiated in a reasonable time, the City, in its sole discretion, may terminate negotiations with the highest ranked consultant and begin contract negotiations with the next highest ranked consultant.

The City hereby notifies all consultants submitting qualifications, that it will affirmatively insure that in regard to any contract entered into, pursuant to this request, minority business enterprises will be afforded full opportunity and are encouraged to submit qualifications in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, religion/creed, sex, disability, familial status, national origin/ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, transgender status/gender identity, or source of income in consideration for an award. The City reserves the right to accept or reject any and all submittals, in the best interest of the City.

Appendix A: Contact Summary Sheet

Firm Name: _____

Firm Parent or Ownership: _____

Firm Address: _____

Firm Telephone Number: _____

Person responsible for direct contact with the City of Fargo and services required for this Request for Qualifications (RFQ):

Name: _____ Title: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Email: _____

Person responsible for day-to-day servicing of the account:

Name: _____ Title: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Email: _____

Types of services provided by the firm: _____

Appendix B: Resources for Preparing a Consolidated Plan and Assessment of Fair Housing:

Consolidated Plan Guidance: <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/consolidated-plan/>

Fargo's current (2015-2019) Consolidated Plan can be viewed at:
<http://fargond.gov/city-government/departments/planning-development/plans-studies>

Assessment of Fair Housing Guidance: <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/affh/overview/>