

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

SCOPE

City of Niagara Falls seeks a qualified professional consultant to conduct a variety of activities regarding City of Niagara Falls affordable housing demographics, needs, and regional markets to help inform and prepare sections of the next Annual Action Plan 2021-2022 for the City of Niagara Falls HUD-CPD Programs. Consultant will also present this information to Niagara Falls' citizens and stakeholders and draft the Housing Needs Assessment and Housing Market Analysis sections of the Annual Action Plan 2021-2022 (for HUD-CPD programs). A final draft of an Annual Action Plan 2021-2022 must be completed by the professional consultant in a condensed timeline and delivered to the City of Niagara Falls.

Respondents will follow the Annual Action Plan 2021-2022 requirements at HUD CPD Notice-12-009, and the IDIS Desk Guide found at <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/2641/econ-planning-suite-desk-guide-idis-conplan-action-plan-caper-per> regarding the Consultation (PR-10), Citizen Participation (PR-15), and Needs Assessment (NA) and Housing Market Analysis (MA) sections of the Annual Action Plan 2021-2022 as applicable. In addition, the Respondent will oversee and coordinate all public hearings, public comment portions of the Annual Action Plan 2021-2022 as well the six main sections of the Annual Action Plan 2021-2022 (Needs Assessment, Market Analysis, Strategic Plan, Action Plan, Executive Summary, and the Plan Process) as applicable.

Consultant must be willing to commit to a timeline that includes a very limited timeframe most likely within 180 days. Examples include: information-gathering, data collection, stakeholder consultation and public meetings, pre-draft review, drafting & review, and post-draft follow-up as needed.

The HUD-CPD programs included in this RFP are the HOME Program, the Emergency Solutions Grant Program, and the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) and its related Annual Action Plan 2021-2022. These requirements are included in the scope of this RFP.

The objective of this RFP is to locate a source that will provide the best overall value to the CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS. While price is always a significant factor, other criteria will form the basis of the decision. A full description is available in the Proposal EVALUATION CRITERIA.

City of Niagara Falls reserves the right to amend, suspend, terminate, or reissue this RFP, in whole or in part, at any stage. In no event is CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS liable to respondents for any cost or damages incurred in connection with the RFP process, including but not limited to, any and all costs of preparing a response to this RFP, or any other costs incurred in reliance on this RFP. No respondent shall be entitled to repayment from CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS for any costs, expenses, or fees related to this RFP. All supporting documentation submitted in response to this RFP will become the property of the CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS. Respondents may also withdraw their interest in the RFP, in writing, at any point in time, as more information becomes known.

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GENERAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION

City of Niagara Falls Program Year for HUD-CPD Programs is April 1 through March 31. The next Annual Action Plan 2021-2022 must be ready to submit to HUD in IDIS by September 1, 2021.

CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS is the Grantee for the following HUD-CPD affordable housing programs: The Emergency Solutions Grant, HOME, and CDBG programs. The CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS also administers the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program.

Consultant will follow the most current requirements when conducting the activities and drafting

- HUD Annual Action Planning Suite, Annual Action Plan 2021-2022 in IDIS Desk Guide -HUD Exchange
- Citizen Participation And Consultation Toolkit <https://www.hudexchange.info/consolidated-plan/econ-planning-suite-citizen-participation-and-consultation-toolkit>
- City of Niagara Falls Public Participation Plan for HUD-CPD Programs. Please view the City of Niagara Five Year Consolidated Plan 2020-2024 on the HUD website. The City of Niagara Falls selects the consultant on or around April 30th, 2021. Deadline for all activity results and Annual Action Plan sections to be in final draft form due on or around September 1, 2021 to the CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS. The City of Niagara Falls submits Annual Action Plan 2021-2022 to HUD for review.
- Pre-Drafting and Drafting activities must take into account the following required timelines: One Pre-Draft public meeting advertised by 30-day published notice, one Post-Draft public hearing, and one Post-draft 30-day public comment period (will occur within the same 30-day timeframe and published in the same notice).
- Submission date of the Annual Action Plan to HUD is on or before October 15, 2021.
- Consultant will conduct (4) stakeholder sessions and attend one pre-draft and one post-draft) public hearings
- Consultant will be responsible for setting up, maintaining, and tracking the results of the online statewide housing needs survey. Consultant will then compile and summarize the results of the survey in a report to be posted online and available to the public.
- CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS will coordinate with Consultant to schedule the dates of the two (2) required public hearings, two (2) 30-day public comment periods.
- CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS will publish all required legal notices and distribute information regarding surveys, legal notices, etc., to the public and stakeholders.

- CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS Community Development staff will work closely with the Consultant on HUD IDIS submission, IDIS access, Annual Action Plan submission, and staff training as deemed appropriate

¹HUD-CPD Integrated Disbursement and Information System

THE APPROACH

There are three general phases to the overall project.

Pre-Draft Phase:

Information-gathering and consultation activities

Subject to CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS approval, consultant will conduct eight (8) Citizen Participation and Stakeholder Consultation activities currently identified in the Citizen Participation and *Consultation Toolkit* located at <https://www.hudexchange.info/consolidated-plan/econ-planning-suite-citizen-participation-and-consultation-toolkit>.

***The eight (8) activities will include the following four (4) CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS-specific activities:**

1) An Affordable Housing Needs Survey as applicable

This online survey will be anonymous and controlled by the consultant. Questions will address regulatory requirements of the HOME, and ESG programs (housing type, households served, local housing needs, priority populations, etc.) as each relates to housing in the state, and other information as approved by consultant and CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS. Consultant will collect, compile, analyze, and draft the results of the survey into a port format.

2) Update City of Niagara Falls 2021 City-level Demographic, Housing, and Transportation Report as applicable

3) Facilitate Four (4) Regional Topic-Oriented Stakeholder Sessions

Roundtable discussion facilitated by Consultant on the dates/times/locations will be TBD and approved by CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS. Timing will be after the results of the Anonymous Affordable Housing Needs Survey are compiled but prior to the Pre-Draft Public Meeting). CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS will work with Consultant on discussion items, location of each session, and email distribution.

4) One Pre-Draft Public Meeting

Present findings from the eight (8) activities to the public and receive comments. This meeting will be held in Niagara Falls at a time and place TBD. Format and presentation style TBD.

Drafting Timeline Phase:

Consultant will submit, an approved and final draft of all activities, at least 30-45 days prior to the Post-Draft 30-day Comment Period. The Post-Draft 30-day comment period is tentatively scheduled September 1, 2021

- **By July 20, 2021**, consultant will provide CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS, in finalized draft form of all eight completed "Pre-draft Phase" activities and a draft of the following Annual Action Plan Sections as applicable:
 - 1) Consultation (PR-10)
 - 2) Citizen Participation (PR-15)
 - 3) Needs Assessment (NA-10through NA-45)
 - 4) Market Analysis (MA-05 through MA-40 & MA-50)
 - 5) The Plan Process
 - 6) Executive Summary
 - 7) Annual Action Plan 2021

The draft will be submitted as a Word Document via email. Each individual section must satisfy the requirements outlined in HUD's Desk Guide <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/consolidated-plan/guides/#consolidated-plan-template-in-idis>

Post Draft:

- Consultant will be available to provide additional information/responses as needed for the Annual Action Plan 2021-2022 until approved by HUD. The Consultant will also provide technical assistance to Niagara Falls Community Development staff with HUD IDIS training and Annual Action Plan submission among other functions related to HUD approval.

CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provide stakeholder contact information
- Publish legal notices in City of Niagara Falls major newspapers, major libraries, and CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS branch office
- Post online surveys, plans, notices etc. on CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS websites
- Once approved, pay detailed invoices within 30 days
- Review drafts submitted by Consultant within 30-45 days
- Enter Consultant's data and draft information into the appropriate sections in IDIS
- Submit the Annual Action Plan 2021-2022 to HUD by October 15, 2021 in conjunction with the Consultant

PROPOSAL FORMAT

1. Introductory letter that includes the primary contact for the project
2. Statements of qualification and experience for the entity and all individuals involved in the project:
 - a. Description of similar projects that were successfully completed
 - b. Name and contact information of previous clients
 - c. Name and resume of the project manager
 - d. Names and experience of others not listed, but may work on the project
3. Detailed description of the entire project including individual tasks/activities
4. Schedule and detailed timeline
5. Budget with cost breakdown by individual task/activity

PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

In no particular order of importance

- (1) Experience:
 - Describe successful projects of similar size, scope, and timeline (previous state-level Annual Action Plan experience is preferred but not required)
 - Describe working knowledge of the Annual Action Plan 2021-2022 process and related deliverables, including the regulations and requirements;
 - Describe working knowledge of the HOME, CDBG, & ESG programs
 - Describe prior facilitation and consensus building activities with a focus on affordable housing
 - Describe ability to complete the project based on current work load and other projects
 - Describe ability to design, implement, manage, and report an online survey and anonymous responses
 - Describe the project team and their previous relevant experience
 - References with primary contact information
 - Describe ability to present technical data in a user-friendly format compatible with the IDIS online system
- (2) Full description of eight (8) activities, how each activity will be carried out, technology used, personnel, and how the results will be reported and documented, how it can be used to inform and meet the Annual Action Plan 2021-2022 requirements;
- (3) Schedule of proposed activities with timeline and proposed completion date(s);
- (4) Project completion timeline for individual activities, written responses, reports, etc.;
- (5) Complete cost breakdown by individual activity and overall project;

PROPOSAL SELECTION PROCESS

- 1) CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS will review each proposal that meets the evaluation criteria. Phone interview may be conducted for additional clarification
- 2) Proposal will be selected on or around April 28, 2021
- 3) Scope of work, drafting and submission timeline, and price will be negotiated with the successful contractor.
- 4) If CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS and the contractor are unable to reach an agreement, CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS retains the right to move on and negotiate with other contractors.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

1. Send three (3) copies, each copy in a 3-ring binder to:

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

City of Niagara Falls Community Development Department
1022 Main St
Niagara Falls, NY 14301

2. Email one complete scanned version to: clifford.scott@niagarafallsny.gov
3. The envelope or packing container containing the submission must bear the vendor name and address, be sealed and must be clearly marked in the LOWER LEFT CORNER with the RFP number. Submissions, which are received in a packing envelope or container, should also bear the RFP number in a conspicuous place. Failure to do this may cause the premature opening of the submission, which may compromise its confidentiality.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION DEADLINE

- 4p.m. (EST) April 15, 2021
- Late or incomplete submittals will be rejected

GENERAL INFORMATION & REQUIREMENTS

- All work will be performed on a fixed-rate, cost-incurred basis. CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS will retain 10 percent (10%) of each payment request. Final retainage (payment) is subject to a satisfactory final product, as determined by CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS.
- If CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS determines progress, as measured by the agreed upon timeline and activity description, is inadequate, it reserves the right to terminate the contract with a 30-day written notice.
- CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS strongly desires continuity of lead staff. Therefore, when key staff are replaced, if CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS deems the replacement unacceptable, consultant will have 30 days from date CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS issues such notice in writing, to provide acceptable replacement staff by written notice. Failure to do so may be defined as a breach of contract and subject to cancellation.
- Although cost is a factor, CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS reserves the right to select the consultant that best suits its needs.
- CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, and/or waive any irregularities therein.
- Evidence of General and Professional Liability Insurance required prior to execution of contract.
- Any changes in project cost, timeline, or scope during the contract must be pre-approved in writing by both the parties.

QUESTIONS/INQUIRIES

Please send questions or inquiries to:

Clifford Scott: Clifford.Scott@niagarafallsny.gov

716.286.8800

Verbal or faxed submissions not accepted;

CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS accepts no responsibility for any delivery system.