



REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

GRANT WRITING, PROJECT/GRANT MANAGEMENT, ENGINEERING AND ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES for the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG), Hazard Mitigation Assistance Program, and related funding opportunities.

1. INTRODUCTION

Notice is hereby given that the Rapides Area Planning Commission (RAPC) is seeking expressions of interest and statements of qualifications from firms to assist with obtaining federal funding for and implementation of hazard mitigation projects.

RAPC is a quasi-governmental council of governments created by state legislation in 1956. As such, our agency assists member and partner governments in planning and project/program implementation in areas such as transportation, floodplain management, building code enforcement, and subdivision development review.

Currently, our agency is seeking consultant services for assistance in grant writing, project/program development, and project/program implementation for our hazard mitigation efforts. Specifically, we are pursuing buyouts, elevations, and capital drainage improvements including, but not limited to, projects included in the Rapides Parish Comprehensive Resiliency Plan (2017).

2. SCOPE OF SERVICES

The purpose of this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is for RAPC to acquire comprehensive Engineering, Design, Architectural and Project Management Services supplemental to Grant Writing and Project/Program Development services. The selected contractor, working closely with RAPC staff, will assist in obtaining federal awards for identified projects as well as strategically engineering and designing pre-award and post-award eligible projects in addition to assisting in the project development and administration of the federal and/or state mitigation programs. Services provided in the development of such programs may include, but are not limited to, the following:

A. Organizational Assistance

- Provide support related to the formulation of the needed organization and budget structure to sustain the overall recovery efforts.
- Improve utilization of federal funding to assist with recovery efforts including assistance in the identification of opportunities to obtain grants to meet recovery funding requirements.

B. Engineer/Architectural Services and Grant Management Support

- Formulate and establish procedures to manage the grants in accordance with Federal, State, and RAPC specific regulations with special attention given to working with GOHSEP and OCD.
- Provide knowledge, experience, technical competence, and oversight in the Engineering, Design, and Architectural services of eligible projects relative to the CDBG, HMGP, PDM, FMA and related programs.
- Grant Management support relative to planning, administration, implementation and execution of the following FEMA- administered programs: Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) and; HUD administered Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program; and other Federal and state grant and assistance programs in compliance with Federal and state guidance.

- Map the flow of documentation and requirements, and related policies and procedures required for transparent program administration of hazard mitigation funds.
- Provide assistance related to the management of funds requested and received. Participate in meetings with Federal grant agencies as required by RAPC.
- Establish quality assurance / quality control reviews of engineering and design components and assessments associated with the payments process to ensure that they are in compliance with Federal and state regulations and conform to best practices.
- Prepare quarterly progress reports and other reports related to funds as required.
- Develop dashboards and reports that promote transparency, efficiency and accountability of engineering, design, and overall project progress.
- Formulate the checklists necessary to assess whether applicant files are completed and in compliance with federal requirements.
- Provide technical assistance as required by RAPC.
- Develop pre-award and post-award protocols for engineering, design, architectural and project management services to include project/program administration.
- Provide pre-award and post-award engineering, design, architectural estimates for each proposed project.

C. FEMA- HMA Programs (HMGP/PDM/FMA) and HUD-CDBG Advisory Services

- Develop a process/system to efficiently submit and store grant applications, identify eligible projects, capture costs, prepare cost reports, reconcile invoices, and close-out projects.
- Attend meetings with relevant local, state, and federal officials to address eligibility and process issues.
- Provide knowledge, experience and technical expertise in dealing with the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program and related program regulations.
- Provide engineering, cost estimating, and architectural support, among other types of technical assistance for all projects.
- Assess damage to infrastructure components and facilities. Determine best design/engineering mitigation to protect against future disasters.
- Obtain, analyze and gather field documentation, including gathering relevant records in order to extract pertinent information.
- Review all data and supporting documentation to determine eligible adequate costs.
- Assist in identifying, developing and evaluating additional opportunities for hazard mitigation projects to reduce or eliminate risk from future events.
- Prepare hazard mitigation proposals, grant applications, benefit cost analysis, and other services related to Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, Pre-Disaster Mitigation, and other mitigation programs
- Evaluate alternate and/or improved projects.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of the use of FEMA pilot programs.
- Reconcile eligible costs.
- Prepare first and second appeals, and work with the RAPC through any arbitration.
- Monitoring construction efforts based on Engineering/Architectural design, reconcile change orders with RAPC, and prepare progress payments.
- Prepared specifications and bid advertisements as needed.
- Conduct assessments that identify housing, infrastructure, and the economic disaster recovery needs.
- Develop and submit HUD required Action Plan for Disaster Recovery, Action Plan Amendments, performance reporting, and grant closeout.
- Prepare projects for audit and respond to audit finding, as required.

3. RFQ RESPONSE TIMELINE

The RFQ process shall adhere to the following schedule:

RFQ Process	Date	Time*
RFQ Issued	September 20, 2019	12:00 p.m.
Contractor's Electronic Questions Due	October 2, 2019	5:00 p.m.
RAPC Responses to Contractor's Questions	October 4, 2019	5:00 p.m.
Proposal Due Date	October 11, 2019	12:00 p.m.

*(CDT)

4. PRE-PROPOSAL QUESTIONS

Questions concerning the specifications in this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) should be directed to the Executive Assistant, Heidi Murrell. Questions will be received until October 2, 2019 at 5:00 pm (CST). An addendum summarizing all questions and answers may be posted to the RAPC website as questions are received but will be posted by October 4, 2019 at 5:00 pm (CST).

Address questions to:
Executive Assistant
Mrs. Heidi Murrell
Email: heidi@rapc.info

Any questions submitted within a proposal that have not been addressed during the question and answer period will be ignored.

5. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Proposals must be received no later than 12:00 pm (CST), October 11, 2019. Responses to the RFQ submitted after the prescribed deadline may not be accepted. Respondents shall submit their proposals electronically to the following email address and with the following subject line:

Email: heidi@rapc.info
Subject: "Name of Firm" SoQ for HM Activities

Proposals may also be delivered to the RAPC physical address, provided that the envelope/package or cover letter contain proper information in the following format:

"Name of Firm"
Statement of Qualifications for RAPC HM Activities

Rapides Area Planning Commission
Attn: Heidi Murrell
803 Johnston St
Alexandria, LA 71301

6. PROPOSAL FORMAT

Proposals must be clear, succinct, and not exceed 40 pages of 8 ½” x 11” paper of no less than 12-point font. Responses must follow the format outlined herein. RAPC may reject as non-responsive, at its sole discretion, any proposal or any part thereof that is incomplete, inadequate in its response, or departs, in any substantive way from the required format.

Proposal responses shall be organized in the following manner. Sections should be tabbed to identify the location of the required information.

- Cover Letter/Letter of Intent
- Experience and Capacity
 - Preparing Successful Grant Applications
 - Engineering/Implementing Projects and/or Programs
- Approach and Methodology
- References

A. Cover Letter/Letter of Intent

The cover letter shall be addressed to Matt Johns, Executive Director. It must contain the following:

- Identification of organization, including name, address and telephone number.
- Name, title, address, and telephone number of contact person during period of proposal evaluation.
- A statement to the effect that the proposal shall remain valid for a period of not less than 90 calendar days from the date of submittal.
- Signature of a person authorized to bind the organization to the terms of the proposal.

B. Experience and Capacity

Describe the types of services the respondent offers that relates to this RFQ, adding emphasis to experience preparing successful grant applications that funded projects and/or programs. Provide specific details on any previous experience with federally funded hazard mitigation programs and projects. Identify engagement and or staff experience with entities comparable to RAPC for which the respondent provides or has provided similar services within the last 10 years. Respondents must indicate the dollar value of the hazard mitigation programs/projects for which they have provided similar services to the ones contemplated in their RFQ. Detail at least one to three (1-3) similar engagements and/or experiences with public-sector clients that would demonstrate that the respondent can provide the requested services, providing emphasis on examples that started with successful grant writing and grant awards. Each example should include:

- Name of the organization.
- Description of the engagement or experience and objectives of the project including beginning and ending dates.
- Provide examples of capital drainage improvement projects that were engineered and designed which would be eligible for the funding by programs previously mentioned in this RFQ as well as any elevation or buyout components of a project/program.
- Information regarding the project that would demonstrate successful experiences by the client, as a result of the recommendations or projects implemented. This may include performance metrics and improvements.
- Description of the federal funding programs managed during the engagement.
- Description of key infrastructure programs or projects advanced as part of the engagement, if any.

RAPC may seek information from references regarding subjects that may include, but not be limited to, the quality of services provided, anticipated ability to perform the services required in this RFQ and the responsiveness of the respondent to the client during the engagement. Please provide at least three (3)

references for the prime respondent and two (2) for any partners or sub-contractors. Each reference should include the name, title, company, address, phone number and email address of the reference.

Provide a summary of the respondent’s technical expertise that describes the respondent’s unique capabilities. This narrative should highlight the respondent’s ability to write successful grant applications and provide the subsequent grant management services. Provide biographical summaries for key individuals and their proposed roles. Resumes may be attached as an appendix and will not count toward the page limit of the proposal.

In addition, identify any sub-consultants and local parties incorporated into the team and clearly explain their expertise, expected role and added value to the engagement.

Specify the primary contact person for the respondent (name, title, location, telephone number, and email address).

C. Approach and Methodology

This section shall include, in narrative, outline, and/or graph form the respondent’s approach to accomplishing the tasks outlined in the Scope of Services section of this RFQ. A description of each task and deliverable and the schedule for accomplishing each shall be included.

Provide examples of how the proposed approach has achieved success in specific, relevant projects for public sector organizations similar to RAPC. The example should contain enough information for the evaluator to ascertain the success of the projects accomplished by the Respondent.

Identify existing staff that will be involved in this effort, including each staff member’s proposed role in the organization, their relevant qualifications, and the allocation of their time to this engagement.

D. References

Provide a list of public sector entities that your firm has partnered with for these types of services. Any entity from the submitted list may be randomly selected and contacted as part of the respondent’s evaluation process. Each client listed should include the following information.

- Name of Entity and Contact
- Title of Contact
- Address (delivery and email)
- Telephone Numbers

7. EVALUATION CRITERIA

This is not a bid. There will not be a public bid opening. Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

Criteria	Weights
Qualifications, Experience and Capacity of the proposed firm for the requested services.	30%
Demonstration of prior successes with similar services and projects (with an emphasis on successful grant application awards)	50%
Technical Approach	10%
Qualifications and experience of the proposed team members for the requested services.	10%

Respondents to this RFQ shall provide information in their proposals that demonstrate the following qualifications:

- A. Respondents must demonstrate experience and success in grant writing as well as implementing federal hazard mitigations programs and/or providing advisory, consulting, and project/grant management support services for federal hazard mitigation programs especially in regards to elevation and buyout projects/programs.
- B. Respondents must demonstrate experience related to grant writing, project management, and engineering of federally funded hazard mitigation programs as they apply to significant drainage infrastructure projects.
- C. Respondents must be able to comply with an accelerated delivery or performance schedule. Respondents that demonstrate they have the staff available to begin immediately will be scored higher than those who need more time, or whose responses are vague.
- D. Respondents must have adequate financial resources to perform the contract, or the ability to obtain them; financial statements for the past 2 years will be required, or equivalent financial records must be included in the proposals.
- E. Respondents that outline a clear and straightforward approach to working with RAPC to provide expert/strategic advisory and compliance support services will score higher, than those that do not.
- F. Respondents shall identify key goals and objectives, and methods for achieving high standards for the delivery of services, in expectation of meeting or exceeding these goals.
- G. Respondents shall explain how they will be organized to effectively deploy support for RAPC and clearly identify engagement managers and different workstream leaders.
- H. Respondents must have a satisfactory record of integrity and business ethics.
- I. Respondents that are corporations, partnerships, or any other legal entity, shall be properly registered or capable to be registered to do business in Louisiana and the U.S. at the time of the submission of their proposals, and comply with all applicable state and U.S. laws and/or requirements.
- J. Respondents shall be required to sign a contract for services approved by RAPC.

8. FINAL SELECTION

A team, comprised of RAPC staff, will be responsible for the proposal evaluations. This team, in accordance with the criteria listed above, will evaluate all proposals received as specified. RAPC team members, in applying the major criteria to the proposals, may consider additional sub-criteria beyond those listed, as may come to light through the review of the various proposals. During the evaluation period, RAPC reserves the right to interview the top selected firms or all the responding firms. RAPC's final selection will be the firm which, in RAPC's opinion, is the most responsive and responsible, meets the requirements in providing this service, and is in RAPC's best overall interest. RAPC maintains the sole and exclusive right to evaluate the merits of the proposals received.

Firms will be objectively evaluated based on their responses to the project scope outlined in the RFQ. The written proposal should clearly demonstrate how the firm could best satisfy the requirements outlined herein. RAPC reserves the right to make such investigations as it deems necessary as to qualifications of any and all firms submitting proposals in response to this RFQ. RAPC further reserves the right to reject any and all proposals received in response to this RFQ, when determined to be in RAPC's best interest. In the event that all proposals are rejected, RAPC reserves the right to re-solicit proposals.

RAPC reserves the right to make an award without further discussion of the proposal submitted. RAPC shall not be bound or in any way be obligated until both parties have executed a contract. RAPC also reserves the right to delay the award of a contract or to not award a contract. The RFQ may be awarded by individual task or total proposal, whichever is most advantageous to RAPC.

RAPC will not be responsible for any expenses in the preparation and/or presentation of the proposals, oral interviews, nor for the disclosure of any information or material received in connection with this RFQ.

The general conditions and specifications of the RFQ and the selected proposal, as amended by agreement between RAPC and the consultant including e-mail or written correspondence relative to the RFQ, may become part of the contract documents. Failure of the consultant to perform as represented may result in elimination of the consultant from competition or in contract cancellation or termination.