



Request for Qualifications: Rock Island, Illinois Community Needs Assessment

Introduction

The City of Rock Island is requesting qualifications from consultants with experience conducting participatory Community Needs Assessments with a focus on employment. Such assessments include but are not limited to the collection of qualitative and quantitative data from a variety of sources, in-depth analysis of that data, and practical proposals for action.

Background

The City of Rock Island is located in northwestern Illinois, situated between the Mississippi and Rock Rivers approximately 175 miles west of Chicago and 175 miles east of Des Moines. Along with the communities of Moline and East Moline, Illinois, and Davenport and Bettendorf, Iowa, the City of Rock Island is part of the Davenport – Rock Island – Moline Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) commonly referred to as the Quad Cities. Rock Island is also the county seat of Rock Island County. In 2010, Rock Island's population was 39,018 in a region of 379,690.

Within the City, there is an area historically referred to as the West End. The area is composed of three neighborhoods: Old Chicago, Douglas Park, and Longview, which are home to over 5,000 people. For decades the area has faced chronic poverty, unemployment, underemployment, and low educational attainment. Property values are some of the lowest in the city, and there is a high volume of police calls and nuisance abatement cases. Additionally, adding to the cultural diversity within the area, the last 10-15 years have seen an influx of immigrants and refugees from Africa and Asia.

Past plans and studies focused on neighborhoods in the West End have proposed actions that focused on the built environment and physical developments. These have produced limited improvements. However, having had that experience, the City would now like to get more information about the social health of the area with a specific focus on employment for young adults (age 16-30). The objective of a Community Needs Assessment would be to engage West End residents and other stakeholders (eg employers) using participatory methods (among others) to uncover the social, cultural, educational, and structural barriers to the types of

employment that would provide them with livable wages, health benefits, and social mobility. The assessment would provide a holistic view of individual, community, and structural issues.

While employment is the entry point for this assessment, we are open to learning about other issues that community members identify as crucial to improving their lives and livelihoods. In addition, we expect that the consultant will design the assessment in a participatory manner that treats residents as equal partners, and will engage the community (with support from City of Rock Island staff) throughout the entire process.

Scope of Work

A consultant is needed to complete the following:

1. Comprehensively review all past plans and studies, and existing secondary data, having to do with the target area and its constituent neighborhoods.
2. Design research protocol and data collection tools.
3. Collect any and all primary data necessary to understand the target area, with a strong emphasis on participatory methods.
4. Analyze the data, and use it to create action-oriented proposals (including metrics for evaluation) that would help residents in the target area improve their lives and livelihoods on individual, community and structural levels.
5. Present the complete assessment document to the City (including executive summary)
6. Deliver a presentation summarizing assessment results at a public meeting.

Contents of RFQ Submittal

The city seeks responses from any consultant who is able to demonstrate applicable experience. Proposals will be evaluated based on experience, responsiveness, and references. Submittals should be a delineation of the consultant's capability to satisfy the intent and requirements of this RFQ. An officer authorized to make the submittal shall write and sign an introductory cover letter. Consultants who submit their qualifications must include the following:

- Description of their experience working on community needs assessments. Three project examples must be included with the submittal.
- Description of their experience collaborating with municipal governments. A minimum of three municipal government references must be provided.
- Description of their experience engaging with low-income, minority populations. An ability to engage non-English-speaking populations must also be specifically addressed.
- Description of proposed approach and process to be used in completion of the above described scope of work, including a proposed timeline.
- Assumptions and expectations about city staff cooperation and assistance.

Submittals should be limited to no more than ten letter size sheets with the exclusion of references and project examples. Submittals shall be delivered digitally to Gerald Jones, Executive Director of the Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center (jones.gerald@rigov.org). Responses will be considered non-binding.

Timeline

The expected timeline for the procurement of this project is as follows:

- June 3: RFQ released and posted.
- June 27: Responses due by 3:00 p.m. Central Standard Time.
- July 1-3: Staff review of RFQ submissions.
- July 8: Staff selection of consultant.
- TBD: Approval of consultant by Rock Island City Council.
- Within two weeks of approval by City Council: briefing meeting with City of Rock Island staff

Insurance

The individual or firm awarded the contract will be expected to carry liability insurance for the duration of the contract.

Conditions and Reservations

The city expects to select an individual or firm to carry out the objectives of this RFQ. The city also reserves the right to reject any or all responses to this RFQ, to advertise for new RFQ responses or accept any RFQ responses deemed to be in the best interest of the city. Qualifications received after the due date will not be considered. Consultants accept all risks of late delivery of submittals regardless of fault.

A response to this RFQ should not be construed as a contract, nor indicate a commitment of any kind. This RFQ does not commit the city to pay for any costs incurred in the submission of a response to this RFQ or any costs incurred prior to execution of the final contract. There will be no payments associated with the submittal. Furthermore, the RFQ does not obligate the City to accept or contract for any expressed or implied services.

If any respondent is considering subcontracting any part of the scope of work to other individuals or firms, the names or proposed subcontractor(s) must be clearly identified in the submittal. Following the award of the contract, no additional subcontracting shall be allowed without the express prior written consent of the city.

A detailed Request for Qualifications (RFQ) information packet including general information, requested services, submittal requirements, and evaluation process is available on the City's website at www.rigov.org.

It is the City of Rock Island's policy to assure that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin or sex, as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise discriminated against under any of its federally funded programs and activities. The City is committed to a program of equal employment opportunity regardless of race, color, creed, sex, age, nationality, disability, or sexual orientation. The successful consultant must comply with the City of Rock Island's equal opportunity requirements.

For further information or questions regarding the content of this Request for Qualifications, contact:

Gerald Jones, Executive Director
The Martin Luther King Center
City of Rock Island
630 9th Street
Rock Island, Illinois 61201
(309) 732-2999
jones.gerald@rigov.org