

Allegheny County
Department of Human Services
Request for Proposals Q&A
RFP for a Homelessness Continuum of Care (CoC) Strategic Planning Consultant

March 27, 2024

- 1. Please confirm if 4.4 New Provider Requirements – the DHS New Provider Application and its supporting documents upon Notice of Intent to Award is the same application as the reference for the MPER Contact in the Response form. If not, please confirm if the vendor is required to register with MPER before intent or if this could be completed after intent to award.**

The New Provider Application is documentation all agencies must complete as the first step to becoming a DHS Provider. MPER is a DHS system for the tracking and management of DHS providers and services. You would be given access to MPER only if you become a DHS Provider, and instructions to access it would be provided at that time. In your Response Form, please indicate an MPER contact where designated, who would be the point of contact between your organization and DHS for providing any necessary documentation, if your organization is selected for the contract award.

- 2. The portal appears to show a separate section to attach the Budget/Budget Narrative Form, however, this information is requested in the Response Form. Please confirm if this information should be in a separate attachment or if it can be included in the Response Form.**

Please include the Budget and Budget Narrative as a separate attachment in Bonfire. The Response Form, and the Budget and Budget Narrative, are requested in separate pieces for ease of evaluation.

Amendments

March 28, 2024

The RFP and Response Form have been amended to include resumes to the list of required attachments, as outlined in the evaluation criteria.

The amendment is outlined below:

4.2 Submit a Proposal

d. Proposers must submit a complete Proposal that includes the following attachments that are available on our Active Solicitations website:

- Response Form

- Partner commitment letters, if applicable
- **Resumes for all key personnel**
- W-9
- Minority, Women or Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (MWDBE) and Veteran Owned Small Business (VOSB) documents (see sections 6.1 and 6.2)

Response Form

ATTACHMENTS

Please submit the following attachments with your Response Form. These can be found at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations.

- Partner commitment letters, if applicable
- **Resumes for all key personnel**
- MWDBE and VOSB documents (*see Sections 6.1 and 6.2 of the RFP for more details*)
- W-9

April 4, 2024

3. Is it possible to increase the page limit to 20 pages to account for information for partners? Please also confirm that resumes are not included in the page count.

Any partner commitment letter(s) should be included as a separate attachment in Bonfire and does not count towards the page limit in your Response Form. Resumes are not included in the page count either.

Office Hours

April 11, 2024

4. What is your agency's experience with engaging people from the community, whether people experiencing or have experienced homelessness? What have you tried in the past and is there any current efforts being made?

The Department of Human Services (DHS) engages community members with lived experience through forums and other meetings available to the public, and by utilizing our provide network. Additionally, our Office of Equity and Engagement (OEE) is consistently working on ways to engage the community. One such tool is [Allegheny Engage](#), where community members can sign up to share ideas and ask questions to enhance and improve the community now and in the future.

The Continuum of Care (CoC) and Homeless Advisory Board (HAB) prioritize engaging community members with lived experienced through establishing workgroups and creating forums that provide opportunities for them to connect and share their experiences. This

engagement remains a challenge for us though, so as stated in the RFP, we're certainly interested in a Successful Proposer who can assist in this area.

5. Could you provide further information on where the objectives identified in the "What's Important to Us" section were derived from? Were they from a previous strategic plan or was a needs assessment completed for the County?

The objectives were derived from building off the previous 5-year strategic plan, its outcomes, and further activities and discussions of the CoC and HAB. We consider these objectives practical, well-informed and evidence-based.

6. What connections or opportunities are there in working with other Allegheny County departments, agencies, or services in completing this strategic plan?

This strategic plan is for the HAB and CoC, which consists of various stakeholders, such as the City of Pittsburgh, the City of Penn Hills, local nonprofits, etc. So, while engagement and collaboration opportunities exist, a strong plan will be responsive to the realities of the CoC and HAB authorities.

7. Is there an estimate budget for this RFP and if so, what is it?

We do not have an estimated budget to provide and are most interested in seeing the costs proposed by Proposers. Proposers should submit a realistic Budget for completion of all tasks outlined in the RFP, and all costs must be justified and explained in the Budget Narrative. All costs will be reviewed for reasonableness, and the final budget and contract terms will be negotiated with the Successful Proposer.

8. Is there a website where we can locate the contract requirements, such as the MWDBE/VOSB forms or insurance requirements, that are listed in the RFP?

Yes. Please refer to Section 6: "Contract Requirements for Successful Proposers" of the RFP for more information on the County's contract requirements.

9. With the collaborative Proposal approach, a subcontractor must submit a Proposal, then list its subcontractors, and the subcontractors sign a form indicating their commitment, correct?

Yes. Any collaborative Proposals must consist of a lead agency who DHS would enter into the Agreement with, and a partner agency/agencies who would be subcontracted through the lead agency. A partner commitment letter must be submitted for any partner identified to demonstrate their proof of commitment.

10. Regarding the consolidated information from this office hours, will the Q&A only be on Bonfire or is there a website where we can access and review the transcript?

Yes, the finalized Q&A from our office hours will be published on the [RFP Opportunity Page](#) on [Bonfire](#) and our [Active Solicitation Webpage](#). The Active Solicitation Webpage requires no login to view documents. Updates to the Active Solicitations Webpage typically occur on Thursdays. Updates to Bonfire occur more frequently.

April 18, 2024

11. Can the County provide the results from the 2017 5-year strategic plan?

The outcomes report has not been finalized for public release, however DHS and the HAB will work collaboratively with the Successful Proposer to provide any relevant information and context for successful development of the next strategic plan. In the interim, the following Strategic Initiative outcomes can be highlighted:

- **Second Avenue Commons:** This five-story, 45,000 square foot facility opened in November 2022 and is the first of its kind in Allegheny County, providing year-round shelter and wrap-around services to address mental and physical health issues, substance misuse, and other complex challenges faced by individuals experiencing homelessness. The vision for the facility centers on dignity and autonomy, safety and security, harm reduction and trauma-informed care. Its plan and design were informed by best practices across the country and by experts across sectors – including human services, health care, government, nonprofit, and public safety. Key components include: Case management to assess individual needs and match to appropriate resources and services ; An on-site clinic for physical and mental health services, as well as drug and alcohol treatment; A drop-in center where people can access hygiene facilities, laundry, food, a seating area, and a library/computer room; Mail services for those without a permanent address; 95 shelter beds (with room for an additional 42 overflow beds); 42 single room occupancy units to facilitate people’s transition to independent housing.
- **Housing Navigation Unit** launched in 2018, designed to bring together landlords, service providers and the tenants that they serve. The Housing Navigators improve communication between service providers and landlords in the private rental market. This partnership builds trust, resolves problems, and fosters a mutually beneficial working relationship between all parties that improves service delivery. The Housing Navigators also expand resources and the pool of landlords willing to work with DHS housing programs to provide access to the private rental market more quickly and reduce homelessness. The Housing Navigators are DHS’s experts in affordable housing and provide information, training and technical assistance to landlords, service providers, DHS staff and tenants.
- The capacity and scope of professional street outreach teams in the CoC have increased significantly, more than tripled since 2016. The CoC’s street outreach effort is led by a strong network of 7 publicly and privately funded teams. The network includes specialty teams to ensure needs presented can be met, including: medical street outreach (e.g., Dr. Jim Withers of Operation Safety Net is internationally recognized for his work in street medicine), outreach that incorporates harm reduction strategies; and outreach responsive to health-related social needs. In addition to regular visits of camps, abandoned buildings, cars and hidden locations across the county, outreach teams receive information on where people are located from BigBurgh (a web-app for homeless services), Coordinated Entry,

311, emergency response and law enforcement entities, and community groups. The CoC facilitates a weekly provider meeting to review a by-name list of unsheltered individuals and to strategize effective engagement approaches, and the Homeless Outreach Coordinating Committee (HOCC), a subcommittee of the CoC's advisory board, convenes to strategize how teams can better identify, engage, and support those who are unsheltered.

April 25, 2024

12. What are the expectations for in-person stakeholder engagement?

We anticipate that Proposers will describe their engagement experience, recommended strategies and rationale, and are open to varying approaches based on the expertise of the proposers and their corresponding justification. Our own experience suggests that different formats can have varying strengths, and their utility can also be impacted by the stakeholders being engaged and/or the topic of discussion. As such, we do not have a predetermined plan for engagement, though we do anticipate at least some of the engagement to be in-person.

13. Could you confirm that resumes are not counted towards the page count for the response form?

Correct, resumes are not included in the page count for the Response Form.

14. Is there any scoring associated with the MWDBE and VOSB requirements?

No. Scoring is based on your organization's response to the criteria outlined in Section 3: "Proposal Requirements and Evaluation Criteria" of the RFP.

15. Are we able to choose a firm that fits MBE and VOSB?

No. You must choose to count an individual firm towards only one of the contract goals – you can't cover both with one entity.

16. Would it be acceptable to engage a MBE or VOSB firm that is certified in another state?

You may, however, certifications via other states are accepted only on a case-by-case basis.

17. Our firm would like to partner with a subcontractor that is both a MBE, WBE, and VOSB. We want to be sure that allocating to them at least 20% of the project budget will satisfy all the requirements: 13% MBE, 2% WBE, and 5% VOSB. Can you please confirm?

Please see the response to question #15.

18. Is there an estimated contract start date?

We anticipate a decision by June 2024 and start the contract immediately. The contract start date is contingent on successful negotiation of the budget, final contract terms and completion of the County's Executive Action process.

19. Is there a preference for in-person, hybrid, or virtual engagement for this project?

Please see the response to question 12.