

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS STRATEGIC VISIONING AND PLANNING CONSULTANT SERVICES

PURPOSE

The Rutland Redevelopment Authority (RRA) has begun a Request for Proposal (RFP) process to identify a qualified consultant to guide and execute a strategic visioning and comprehensive planning process to assist the organization in structuring itself to meet the future needs of the City of Rutland.

RESPONDANTS

The RRA seeks a consultant who has demonstrated experience in successfully developing consensus-based strategic plans, has strong facilitation skills, has proven experience with non-profit strategic planning, and a strong understanding of the structure and purpose of economic development organizations.

ABOUT THE RUTLAND REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

The RRA was formed in 1989 in response to “an urgent need to reduce the property tax burden on residential homeowners, to redevelop dilapidated and blighted structures, to revitalize the commercial and industrial sectors of our economy, and to promote economic opportunity for all citizens...”

The organization was created through the charter of the City of Rutland and receives funding from the City through an annual agreement for services, in addition to the ability to levy a Special Benefits Tax on non-residential properties in the Special Benefits District (SBD). The RRA charter is available here:

<https://d3oenxrebt8fm.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/RRA-Charter.pdf>

The primary responsibilities of the RRA are:

- Serves as the primary grant administrative agent for the City of Rutland Community Development projects.
- Grand list and job development.
- To focus on residential development in the downtown and city wide.
- Marketing and promoting the SBD, a responsibility that is subcontracted to the Downtown Rutland Partnership.
- Implementing blighted property strategies formed through housing needs assessments and studies.
- Take a lead role in coordinating working groups of stakeholders to develop long and short-term housing strategies.
- City planning and growth center management including an emphasis on retaining the State granted Designated Downtown Status.

More information on the organizations is available at www.rutlandvtbusiness.com

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The RRA is governed by a Board of Commissioners consisting of nine (9) members, all of whom must be residents of the City of Rutland. One member is the City Treasurer, one is an appointed representative from the Board of Alderman. The remaining seven (7) are appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the Board of Alderman.

The RRA currently has one full time staff member whose primary responsibility is the administration of grants for the City of Rutland.

Traditionally, the RRA has had an Executive Director whose responsibilities included the day to day running of the organization, in addition to taking a lead role in performing the duties of the organization's primary responsibilities outlined above.

The Executive Director has stepped down, leaving the RRA without primary leadership. Prior to an effort to search for a qualified Executive Director, the Board of Commissioners has recognized a need to review/revise not only the responsibilities of that role, but to develop a strategic vision and plan for the organization as whole, in order to provide quality service to the citizens of Rutland City.

SCOPE OF WORK AND DELIVERABLES

We expect the project to include the following:

- Project management over the course of services.
- Oversee and lead a strategic visioning and comprehensive planning process.
- Develop an actionable strategic plan with recommendations for implementation.

The proposal should include:

- Understanding of the work to be performed, estimated hours, and other pertinent information.
- Organization description, size and structure. Indicate whether the firm is a small or woman- or minority-owned business.
- Qualifications and resumes of all staff to be assigned to the project.
- Experience of the consultant with organizational visioning processes.

Over the course of work of this project, the RRA expects the chosen consultant to:

- Research and gain an understanding of the RRA by reviewing the organization's charter, agreement for services with the City, and other pertinent information as available on the City and RRA websites.
- Benchmark the RRA with other similar economic development organizations.
- With the assistance of the Board of Commissioners, seek input from community stakeholders to identify areas of strength and weakness of the organization in order to facilitate positive working relationships in the future.
- Interviews with representatives of the Rutland City Board of Aldermen, Planning Commission, Development Review Board, and Department Heads, Rutland Regional Planning Commission, Chamber and Economic Development, Housing Trust of Rutland County. Plan for ten (10) partner interviews.
- Conduct meetings with the board and staff to create consensus regarding a strategic vision and plan. Plan for four (4) meetings.

PROJECT GOALS

The ultimate goals the Board of Commissioners hopes to achieve through collaboration with this consultant include:

- Create a plan for the future of the RRA.
- Review the role of the RRA with respect to other organizations to identify gaps and/or overlap of responsibilities.
- Make recommendations as to the structure and number of staff members.
- Identify work the RRA does that could be better served by other organizations.
- Assist in creating a job title and description for the position historically called the "Executive Director".

PROPOSAL FORMAT

To best evaluate the ability of the consultant to meet our goals, please include the following in your proposal:

- Name and address of your firm.
- Names and qualifications for all personnel to be assigned to this project.
- Describe the relevant experience of all staff to work on this project.
- Examples of similar projects.
- Describe your approach to a strategic planning and visioning process.
- Three client references.
- Suggested project timeline with major tasks and milestones.
- Project budget by line item including rates for professional fees.

The proposal must describe the consultant's qualifications and experience to conduct the scope of work activities. Experience should include examples of conducting similar or related work as well as experience working with smaller economic development or not for profit community-service based organizations.

To accomplish the scope requested, the consultant will need to possess the following qualifications:

- Experience at successfully developing consensus-based strategic plans.
- Possess strong facilitation skills.
- Ability to solicit input from multiple community partners and developers.
- Knowledge of marketing, communications and branding.
- Knowledge of resource development.
- Ability to constructively challenge key stakeholders.
- Experience inspiring others to think innovatively.
- Project management experience.

The proposal should contain a detailed description of the activities to be conducted by the consultant to complete the requested scope of work, including:

- Activities to be conducted during the planning process.
- Estimated timeline for each activity.
- Milestones and associated deliverables.
- Estimated cost broken down by task.

Please include contact information for at least three references of individuals who can speak to their experience with the consultant in conducting projects of similar scope.

The proposal should include at least two examples of written work similar to the scope of work requested within this RFP.

SCORING

Proposals will be reviewed and evaluated based on the following criteria:

- **Qualifications:** Consultant has the qualifications necessary to successfully complete the scope of work.
- **Experience:** The consultant has prior experience working with similar organizations on strategic planning projects.
- **Scope of Proposal:** The proposal demonstrates an understanding of the project objectives and desired results.
- **Approach:** The proposal illustrates an approach to the scope of work that will likely lead to the successful development of an actionable strategic plan.
- **Work Plan:** The proposal adequately details project activities and milestones, or deliverables associated with each stage of the scope of work
- **Timeline:** The proposal includes a detailed timeline for each stage ○ The work can be completed within a reasonable project timeline
- **Budget:** The proposal includes a clear budget for each stage of the scope of work and proposed costs are reasonable.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Proposals for this project are due at 3pm on Friday January 13th. Late proposals will not be accepted.

Questions may be emailed to Edward Clark, Chair of the Rutland Redevelopment Authority Board of Commissioners at eclark@nbfarchitects.com.

All costs incurred in the preparation of a response to this RFP are the responsibility of the bidder and will not be reimbursed by the Rutland Redevelopment Authority or the City of Rutland.

Proposals shall be in electronic PDF format not exceeding 10megs, submitted via email to: adminrra@rutlandvtbusiness.com.

The Rutland Redevelopment Authority reserves the right to reject any and all responses received in response to this RFP. An agreement for services will be executed with the awarded consultant.

If the bidder deems any material submitted to be proprietary or confidential, that must be indicated in the relevant section(s) of the response.

TIMELINE FOR REVIEW AND CONSULTANT SELECTION

It is expected that a consultant will be selected within two to three weeks of the closing submission date, although this timeline is subject to change. At the conclusion of negotiations with the successful consultant, all bidders submitting responses to this RFP will be informed in writing of the name of the successful firm or individual.

- RFP Released: December 28, 2022.
- Proposals Due: January 13, 2023, 3:00 PM.
- Consultant Selection: January 20, 2023
- Project begins: January 24, 2023
- Project completion: February

The Rutland Redevelopment Authority will select the proposal which it feels will deliver the highest quality deliverable at the best value. Proposals will be reviewed by the Board of Commissioners.

Price will be a significant, but not the only, criteria in evaluating the proposals. Consideration will also be given to the following:

- Ability of the bidder to provide all aspects of the proposal.
- Compliance of the consultant and proposal with the project requirements outlined above.
- The extent to which the proposed deliverable meets the scope and goals outlined in the RFP.
- Experience with similar organizations and portfolio of work.

The award will be made to the qualified bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the RRA, with price and other factors considered. The RRA may request proposal presentations by meeting with any or all bidders to clarify or negotiate modifications to proposals, however, the RRA also reserves the right to make an award without further discussion of the proposals submitted. Therefore, proposals should be submitted initially on the most favorable terms, from both technical and price standpoints, that the bidder can propose.

The Bidder must disclose any possible conflicts of interest that may result from the award of the contract or the services provided under the contract.