



## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

### **ASSESSMENT OF FAIR HOUSING IN WAUSAU, WISCONSIN**

#### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

##### **STATEMENT OF INTENT**

This Request for Proposals (RFP) seeks a qualified firm or individual to conduct an "Assessment of Fair Housing" (AFH) analysis required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This analysis must be completed in accordance with the requirements defined in HUD's 2015 Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) Rule. The AFH is an assessment of historical and existing fair housing conditions that result in goals that will be used in the development of the Consolidated Plan for the City of Wausau, and for the development of the W a u s a u Community Development Authority Annual Plans.

The target start date and term for the proposed services is January 2018 to February 2019, subject to negotiation of a final agreement. The AFH must be submitted to HUD prior to February 15, 2019.

##### **BACKGROUND**

The Fair Housing Act calls for HUD and its program participants to abide by the Act's intent of promoting fair housing and equal opportunity. On July 16, 2015, HUD adopted changes to the final AFFH rule. These changes provide program participants with procedural guidelines and data to ensure improved and comprehensive compliance with the Fair Housing Act.

According to HUD, furthering the purposes of fair housing means:

" . . . taking meaningful actions, in addition to combating discrimination, that overcome patterns of segregation and foster inclusive communities free from barriers that restrict access to opportunity based on protected characteristics. Specifically, affirmatively furthering fair housing means taking meaningful actions that, taken together, address significant disparities in housing needs and in access to opportunity, replacing segregated living patterns with truly integrated and balanced living patterns, transforming racially and ethnically concentrated areas of poverty into areas of opportunity, and fostering and maintaining compliance with civil rights and fair housing laws. The duty to affirmatively further fair housing extends to all of a program participant's activities and programs relating to housing and urban development."

HUD's AFFH Final Rule requires program participants to incorporate the policies underlying the Fair Housing Act into their planning processes. Previous strategies to ensure compliance required program participants to complete an Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing (AI). The new AFH requirement replaces the AI.

Efforts to combat ongoing discrimination and increase housing choice and access to opportunity are at the core of HUD's fair housing efforts. However, to date, HUD's fair housing efforts have required its grantees to undertake an AI to housing choice and have not been as effective as HUD intended. Under the AI planning process, HUD did not provide grantees relevant information, and did not clearly link grantees' AI's to community planning efforts, such as the Consolidated Plan.

The AFH replaces the AI with a more effective and standardized assessment. In the AFH, program participants identify and evaluate fair housing issues and factors contributing to fair housing issues. The AFH is an assessment of historical and existing fair housing conditions, focusing specifically on:

1. Patterns of integration and segregation;
2. Racially and ethnically concentrated areas of poverty;
3. Disparities in access to opportunity (proficient schools, jobs, transit & low transportation costs, clean air, low exposure to poverty, high labor market engagement); and
4. Disproportionate housing needs.

As part of this new requirement, HUD will provide additional data for communities to analyze and address fair housing activities related to the expenditure of federal community development funds.

## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL PROCESS**

This RFP seeks the submission of proposals to provide services from any and all interested and qualified Contractors. The City of Wausau seeks, by way of this RFP, to obtain the listed services in a manner that maximizes the quality of services while also maximizing value to the City and, by extension, the citizens of Marathon County. Contractors must be able to show they are capable of performing the services requested. Such evidence includes, but is not limited to, the respondent's demonstrated competency and experience in delivering services of a similar scope and type, and the local availability of the Contractor's personnel and equipment resources.

## **SCOPE OF WORK**

### **DESCRIPTION**

The Contractor must refer to the HUD-provided checklist and worksheet to ensure they have completed the steps required for a complete AFH.

The City of Wausau and the Wausau Community Development Authority will:

- Provide a list of primary City/Housing Authority contacts;
- Provide data and assessment of prior Analysis of Impediments;
- Assist identifying local data and local knowledge;

- Assist identifying stakeholders for and participate in community meetings;
- Assist identifying contributing factors, priorities, and goals for fair housing; and
- Review and analyze data findings, recommendations and the final report.

#### **Using HUD’s AFH User Interface**

The Contractor must use HUD’s AFH User Interface to upload and submit the entire AFH to HUD.

#### **Using the Assessment Tool to Complete the AFH**

The Contractor will use HUD’s Assessment Tool to the complete AFH and will refer to HUD’s AFFH Rule Guidebook as a roadmap for this work. The tool is designed to identify fair housing issues, determine the factors that significantly contribute to those issues (including what data to use), and develop a plan to overcome them. The AFH must include:

- Summary of fair housing issues and capacity;
- Analysis of HUD-provided data, local data, and local knowledge;
- Assessment of fair housing issues and contributing factors; and
- Identification of fair housing priorities and goals.

#### **Supplementing HUD-Provided Data with Local Data and Local Knowledge**

The Contractor will work with the City to identify and supplement HUD-provided data with local data and local knowledge. This data includes, but is not limited to the information obtained through the community participation process. The Contractor will develop an initial list of County data required prior to beginning an in-depth analysis.

#### **Analyzing Fair Housing Data**

The Contractor will use HUD-provided data to assess fair housing issues and contributing factors in order for the City of Wausau to set fair housing priorities and goals for the area. Data must provide benchmarks to allow for the measuring of trends and changes over time.

#### **Analyzing HUD-Provided Maps & Tables**

HUD will provide data through maps and tables that will be available in the User Interface and the AFFH Data and Mapping Tool. The Contractor may provide additional relevant maps for attachment through the AFFH User Interface. The Contractor will analyze HUD-provided maps showing racially and ethnically concentrated areas of poverty, dot density maps showing the geographic dispersion of different racial and ethnic groups, and thematic maps showing disparities in the location of proficient schools across the jurisdiction and region. HUD maps provide census tract boundaries and the borders of the jurisdiction. The Contractor will analyze HUD-provided tables including but not limited to, the percentages of various races in a jurisdiction and region, the number of public housing units within a jurisdiction, and the number of residents with a particular type of disability in a jurisdiction.

#### **Developing Maps & Gathering Local Data**

The Contractor is required to supplement HUD-provided maps with local data and knowledge. Local data refers to metrics, statistics, and other quantified information that is relevant to the County’s geographic areas of analysis that can be found through a reasonable amount of search, are readily available at little or no cost, and are necessary for the completion of the AFH using the Assessment Tool. Local knowledge refers to information to be provided by the City that relates to the geographic areas of analysis and is necessary for the completion of the AFH using the Assessment Tool.

Local knowledge includes information that is gathered through the community participation process and by consulting local, state, or regional planning departments, academics, and others with knowledge of the local areas or whose work impacts on housing. The Contractor is required to consult directly with assigned staff from the City of Wausau.

#### **Facilitating a Community Participation Process – Consultation Meetings**

The Contractor is required to conduct consultation meeting(s) with organizations, including but not limited to: local fair housing organizations(s), public and private housing providers, state housing coalitions, affordable housing advocates, affordable housing developers, community-based organizations, tenant organizations, faith-based organizations, social service agencies, philanthropic organizations, and realtors. The Contractor will submit a list of questions to the City for review prior to holding the consultation meetings. This list will be reviewed and approved for use during the community participation process.

The Contractor will assist in documenting the community participation process. This includes a summary of the effectiveness of outreach efforts and comments received. The documentation will include a summary of the comments, views, and recommendations, received in writing, or orally at public hearings, during the community participation process, including a summary of any comments, views, and recommendations not accepted by the City and the reasons for non-acceptance. The community participation and consultation process must include organizations and other interested members of the public in the jurisdictions of each Collaborating Party, and not just those of the lead entity.

#### **Facilitating a Community Participation Process – Public Meetings**

The City is required to provide opportunities for community participation throughout the development of the AFH. The Contractor must follow the policies and procedures described in the city's Citizen/Community Participation Plan. The Citizen Participation Plan should be used in the development of the AFH to obtain community feedback and address complaints. The Contractor must also consult with the Community Development Authority or other resident organizations, provide an opportunity for the submission of comments, and conduct a public hearing. The Contractor is expected to prepare and provide a presentation on the City's objective to affirmatively further fair housing at several community meetings (to be agreed upon) and address public comments and questions. These comments and questions are to be summarized and included in the AFH with a listing of all public recommendations accepted or not accepted, and the reasons for the acceptance or rejection of the recommendation. Local knowledge is to be obtained from the public gatherings and utilized in the development of the AFH. The community participation process must include residents and other interested members of the public in the County and the jurisdictions of each Collaborating Party.

If contracted to facilitate the Community Participation process, the Contractor must:

- Make the HUD-provided data and any other data to be included in the AFH available to residents, public agencies, and other interested parties;
- Conduct several public meetings (to be agreed upon);
- Publish the proposed AFH in a manner that affords residents and other the opportunity to examine its content and submit comments;
- Provide for at least one public hearing during the development of the AFH; and
- Provide a period of not less than 30 calendar days to receive comments from

residents of the community.

The City may choose to lead the community participation process without the Contractor. If so, the City may require a minimal amount of consultation with the Contractor for the planning and execution of the meetings.

### **Identifying Fair Housing Contributing Factors**

The identification and prioritization of contributing factors is a process intended to inform goal setting, and help identify strategies, actions, and policy responses to fair housing issues. The Contractor must identify fair housing issues and contributing factors, prioritizing those factors that limit or deny fair housing choice of access to opportunity, negatively impact fair housing, or violate civil rights compliance. The prioritization of the contributing factors must be justified.

### **Setting Fair Housing Priorities & Goals**

The Contractor is required to identify at least one or more goal(s) to overcome the fair housing issues for which significant contributing factors have been identified. The Contractor is to guide the City in identifying goals and setting priorities based on findings and data. HUD recommends SMART goals – Specific, Measurable, Action-Oriented, Realistic and Time-bound. For each goal, the Contractor must:

- Identify one or more contributing factors that the goal is designed to address;
- Describe how the goal relates to overcoming the identified contributing factor(s) and related fair housing issue(s);
- Identify the metrics and milestones for determining what fair housing results will be achieved, including the timeframes for achieving them; and
- Identify the responsible party for each goal.

### **Preparing and Conducting Public Presentation of Draft AFH Plan**

The Contractor will submit the preliminary draft AFH to the City for review and comments. The Contractor will revise the AFH according to the City's changes and then submit drafts for the City to review. The Contractor may be required to join the City's staff at public hearings to present the draft AFH to the Common Council.

### **Ensuring Content of Draft AFH Plan Complies with AFFH Rule Guidebook**

The Contractor must ensure the AFH complies with HUD's AFFH Rule Guidebook. The Assessment Tool outlines the required prompts and questions and includes instructions for the AFH and includes the following:

- I. Cover Sheet
- II. Executive Summary
- III. Community Participation Process
- IV. Assessment of Past Goals and Actions
- V. Fair Housing Analysis
  - a. Demographic Summary
  - b. General Issues
    - i. Segregation/Integration
    - ii. . Racially or Ethnically Concentrated Areas of Poverty (R/ECAPs)
    - iii. . Disparities in Access to Opportunity
    - iv. . Disproportionate Housing Needs

- c. Publicly Supported Housing Analysis
  - d. Disability and Access Analysis
  - e. Fair Housing Enforcement, Outreach Capacity, and Resources
- VI. Fair Housing Goals and Priorities

### **Responding to Public Comments**

The Contractor will submit the draft report to the City with supporting data in electronic format. After review and acceptance of the draft report by the City, the report and supporting data will be released to the public, providing them 30 calendar days to submit their comments.

The Contractor will review and address comments received through the public comment period and prepare a revised AFH draft for approval by the City of Wausau.

### **Submitting Final AFH Plan**

After the approval of the AFH by the City of Wausau, the Contractor will submit the AFH using HUD's online Assessment of Fair Housing User Interface for review and consideration by February 1, 2019.

### **Revising and Resubmitting the Final AFH Plan**

The Contractor will be available for revision and resubmission of the Final AFH Plan if HUD determines the AFH is inconsistent with fair housing or civil rights requirements or if the AFH is substantially incomplete. The Contractor must also provide assistance to the Community Development Authority by making the revised AFH available to the public for a 30-day review and comment period. If HUD deems the revision unacceptable the Contractor will repeat the revision and resubmission process.

## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS PROCEDURE**

The RFP response must be submitted electronically to [tammy.stratz@ci.wausau.wi.us](mailto:tammy.stratz@ci.wausau.wi.us) by 5:00 p.m. Central Standard Time on **December 29, 2017**.

All responses must be received by the stated date and time in order to be considered for award. The City will not be responsible for and may not accept late proposals due to slow internet connection or for any other electronic failure (including, but not limited to, information transmission and internet connectivity failures).

By submitting a proposal, each Contractor certifies that its submission is not the result of collusion or any other activity which would tend to directly or indirectly influence the selection process. The proposal will be used to determine the Contractor's capability of rendering the services to be provided. The failure of a Contractor to comply fully with the instructions in this RFP may eliminate its proposal from further evaluation as determined in the sole discretion of the City. The City reserve the right to evaluate the contents of proposals submitted in response to this RFP and to select a contractor, if any.

Proposals received late will not be opened or given any consideration for the proposed services unless doing so is deemed to be in the best interest of the City.

## TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

EVENT	DATE
Release Request for Proposals	November 2017
Proposal Deadline	December 29, 2017
Contractor Selection	January 2018
Execute Contractor Agreement / Project Start	January 2018
Community Participation Process (Public Meetings)	March 2018
First Draft of AFH Submitted	June 2018
Review and comment of draft AFH to Contractor	July 2018
Public comment period	August 2018
Public Presentation of draft AFH & Required Jurisdiction Approval	October 2018
Final Submission of AFH to HUD & PDFs submitted	February 1, 2019

## PROPOSAL EVALUATION

All proposals received will be evaluated by an RFP Evaluation Committee. During the evaluation process, the City may require a Contractor's representative to answer specific questions orally and/or in writing.

Once a finalist or group of finalists is selected, additional interactions or information may be required. The RFP Evaluation Committee will select the individual or firm that submits the most responsive proposal. Selection will be based on the overall strength of each proposal, and the evaluation is not restricted to considerations of any single factor, such as cost. A local preference may be used in the selection process.

The criteria used as a guideline in the evaluation will include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. Qualifications and experience of the entity, including capability and experience of key personnel and experience with other public or private agencies to provide these services
2. Proposed approach, including clarity of understanding of the scope of services to be provided and appropriateness of the proposed solution/services
3. Customer service
4. History of successfully performing services for public or private agencies
5. Ability to meet any required timelines or other requirements
6. Claims and violations against you or your organization
7. Cost for the primary services described by this RFP
8. References

The Evaluation Committee may consider any other criteria it deems relevant, and the Evaluation Committee is free to make any recommendations it determines to be in the best interest of the City. Inaccuracy of any information supplied within a proposal or other errors constitute grounds for rejection of the proposal.

Note that the City reserves the right to evaluate proposals solely based on each provider's written submission. In relation to written materials, evaluation will be performed only on the material included directly in the proposal itself unless otherwise indicated or requested by the City. Your proposal must be complete without relying on external websites, sales brochures, marketing materials or white papers. The City reserves the right to select proposals other than those with lowest costs.

## **PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

All proposals should adhere to the specified content and sequence of information described by this RFP.

Submit one (1) complete electronic (PDF, Microsoft Word document, etc.) version of your proposal and any required attachments to the City electronically to [Tammy.Stratz@ci.wausau.wi.us](mailto:Tammy.Stratz@ci.wausau.wi.us).

### **COVER LETTER**

Provide a one page cover letter on your letterhead that includes the address, telephone number, and e-mail address of the contact person or persons. List the name and title of each person authorized to represent the Contractor in negotiations.

Unless the Contractor is an individual, all proposals must be signed with a firm/company/partnership/entity name and by a responsible officer or employee indicating that officer or employee's authorization to commit the Contractor to the terms of the proposal. Obligations assumed by such signature must be fulfilled.

### **SPECIFIED CONTENT AND SEQUENCE OF INFORMATION IN THE RFP**

Each proposal should include sections addressing the following information in the order shown in the following section. The Contractor should be sure to include all information that it feels will enable the Evaluation Committee and, ultimately, the City to make a decision. Failure of the Contractor to provide specific, detailed information may result in its proposal being rejected in favor of a sufficiently-detailed proposal. Any necessary exhibits or other information, including information not specifically requested by this RFP but that you feel would be helpful, should be attached to the end of the proposal.

#### **Qualifications and Experience:**

- Provide a statement of qualifications for your organization, including an organization chart, a statement of the size of firm, a description of services provided by your organization, and a statement of the extent of experience/history providing the services requested by this RFP.
- How many full time employees (FTEs) do you plan to assign to this project if you are selected?
- How many people in total are employed by your company? Delineate between employees and consultants.
- If applicable, list the professional qualifications for each individual that would be assigned to provide services requested by this RFP, including date and educational

institutions of any applicable degrees, additional applicable training, and any professional certifications and/or licensing. In lieu of listing this information, you may submit a resume or curriculum vitae for each such individual if the resume/CV includes all the requested information.

**Proposed Approach:**

This section describes your proposed approach for meeting the services required by the City, as listed above. Relevant considerations include the quality and feasibility of your approach to meeting these needs, the manner in which you plan to provide adequate staffing (if applicable), and equipment or other resources provided by you (if applicable). Keep these considerations in mind as you respond to the following:

- Describe how you will fulfill the needs of the City described in this RFP. Attach a project plan, if appropriate.
- List your needs for physical space and/or equipment at the City during this engagement, if any, aside from space or equipment that would be provided by the City as an obvious aspect of the requested services (for example, computers to document services, etc.).
- Identify how you will meet all other aspects of the scope of work and related requirements stated above. List any items that you cannot provide.

**Customer Service:**

- In the event of a routine problem, who is to be contacted within your organization?
- In the event of the identification of a problem by the City, their clients, and/or other applicable constituents, describe how you will address such problems and the timeframe for addressing them.

**Claims, Licensure and Non-Discrimination Violations Against Your Organization:**

List any current licensure or non-discrimination claims against you/your organization and those having occurred in the past five years, especially any resulting in claims or legal judgments against you.

**Cost Analysis and Budget for Primary Services:**

- Provide an itemized budget and a detailed explanation for all costs associated with your providing the requested services if you are selected. Please itemize and provide a proposal of costs including the community participation process.
- Is travel time to the city of Wausau and other required locations expected to be billable? If so, how will travel time invoices be calculated? Generally, proposals that do not include travel time or expenses are preferred unless the services requested require travel as part of the service.
- Include start-up costs if any.

**References:**

List at least three business references for which you have recently provided similar services. Include contact names, titles, phone numbers and e-mail addresses for all references provided.

**TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

The City reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals or portions thereof without stated cause. Upon selection of a finalist, the City by its proper officials shall attempt to negotiate and reach a final agreement with the finalist. If the City, for any reason, is unable to reach a final agreement with this finalist; the City then reserves the right to reject such finalist and negotiate a final agreement with another finalist who has the next most viable proposal. The City may also elect to reject all proposals and re-issue a new RFP.

The City is not bound to accept the proposal with the lowest cost, but may accept the proposal that demonstrates the best abilities and qualifications to meet the needs of the City. The City reserves the right to waive any formalities, defects, or irregularities, in any proposal, response, and/or submittal where the acceptance, rejection, or waiving of such is in the best interests of the City. The City reserves the right to disqualify any proposal, before or after opening, upon evidence of collusion, intent to defraud, or any other illegal practice on the part of the consultant.

**SIGNATURE BLOCK**

Note: Please return this page with your proposal.

The undersigned, an authorized agent of his/her company, hereby certifies:

- familiarization with all terms, conditions, and specifications herein stated,
- company is qualified to perform work and services as proposed,
- that the proposal submitted is valid until \_\_\_\_\_ (date).

\_\_\_\_\_  
Company Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Authorized Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Type of Entity (S-Corp, LLC, etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Web Site

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address