



Request for Proposals:

RFP #13.19 Community Engagement for Equity in Code Enforcement

March 29, 2019

The City of Newburgh is looking to contract with a qualified individual consultant or organization to facilitate community engagement activities in support of a comprehensive plan for Code Enforcement.

Project Timeline: April – August 2019

Purpose of the Proposal

The City of Newburgh, New York, requests the submission of proposals for a Not-for-Profit organization (“the organization”) to assist the City of Newburgh in our efforts to meaningfully engage local stakeholders in the process of developing and implementing innovative and equitable code enforcement strategies, with emphasis on reaching traditionally underrepresented and marginalized populations such as low-income communities, communities of color, recent immigrants, undocumented persons, families with young children and seniors. This effort is part of the Cities RISE grant program, administered by Enterprise Community Partners, and awarded to the City of Newburgh as a participating recipient.

Background on Cities RISE

Municipalities in New York State face a number of pervasive challenges related to problem properties, neighborhoods, and supporting housing quality standards for occupied properties. Vacant and blighted properties, tax delinquencies, and noncompliant landlords have had a negative impact on communities by reducing quality of life for residents, creating physical hazards, public health problems or public nuisances, lowering surrounding property values, and, when properties are abandoned, leaving neighbors feeling unsafe, neglected and disempowered. The housing crisis has compounded these challenges, leaving under-resourced municipalities scrambling to effectively address housing problems and community concerns, including strategically and equitably deploying code enforcement which can unintentionally disproportionately affect low-income communities. In the face of budget constraints, municipalities are tasked with doing more with less to address these housing challenges and struggle to work from a position of proactive enforcement.

Cities for Responsible Investment and Strategic Enforcement (“Cities RISE”) is equipping municipalities with tools and techniques to better diagnose these problems, create more effective and efficient interventions and programs, and improve systems and processes to foster innovation and leverage resources to make a positive, equitable impact on their communities.

Phase I of Cities RISE provided technology and consulting support to empower local governments to make improvements in data integration and analytics as well as in equitable policy and practices.

Phase II is a two-year long, intensive organizational development process focused on building the capacity of municipalities to make significant progress in their code enforcement strategies through

data-driven innovations, change management and community engagement support. Participating cities will develop new practices (e.g. improvements to operations, policy changes, innovative programs) to address problem properties and code enforcement challenges in the municipality. They will work with multiple stakeholders in the community and in their own organization to generate input and feedback to inform the development of a new and better approach.

The goal of Phase II of the program is to enable and support participants in the development and implementation of new approaches to problem properties and code enforcement challenges that produce positive social outcomes, including:

- Fewer problem properties and fewer at-risk properties
- Higher code compliance rates
- Safer, healthier, higher quality living conditions for residents
- Greater sense of belonging, ownership and empowerment in neighborhoods
- More efficient operations and reduced cost of interventions
- Increased tax collection and payment of utility bills

Project Scope

The contracted consultant or organization will help plan and implement community engagement activities with the goal of seeking input from diverse groups of community stakeholders.

Target audiences and engagement activities to take place in the April - August 2019 timeframe will include:

- 3-5 Public Meetings in conjunction with City Staff
- 1-2 Public Focus Groups to engage specific communities

Key components of the work will likely include:

- Designing and planning of overall community engagement activities in consultation with staff
- Managing 7-10 stipend-based Community Ambassadors who will engage community members around Code Enforcement
- Overseeing execution of all community engagement activities/meetings with appropriate guidance and support from staff including communication and outreach, logistics, content development, and facilitation of discussions
- Providing full and timely reports from all community engagement activities/meetings including 1) detailed notes from each meeting, and 2) summary report and implications

Qualifications

- Over 5 years of experience in related field (nonprofit, foundations, community development) with proven track record of mission-driven work built on deep understanding of and strong engagement with the communities it serves
- Outstanding written, oral/public and visual communication skills
- Expertise in community engagement, facilitation, communications strategy, and event planning.
- Ability to work effectively independently and in close collaboration with diverse constituents including in group or committee settings

Project Budget

The budget will not exceed \$13,000 for this contract. An additional \$7,000 will be available as stipends for Community Ambassadors.

Proposal Requirements

Prospective contractors are requested to submit the following information via email to planning@cityofnewburgh-ny.gov by COB on Friday April 19, 2019 with Subject Line filled as "RFP: Community Engagement – [Your/Organization Name]".

- Cover letter
- Resume/CV or Organizational Qualifications
- Relevant samples of prior work
- Contact information for 3 professional references
- Explanation of your approach to the scope of work with corresponding budget

The City of Newburgh may terminate the RFP process at any time for any reason. The City of Newburgh also reserves the right to reject any and/or all proposals.

The issuance of the RFP does not obligate the City of Newburgh to select a proposal and/or enter into any agreement. Any submission does not constitute business terms under any eventual agreement.

This RFP does not in any way commit the City of Newburgh to reimburse respondents for any costs associated with the preparation and submission this this proposal.

For any questions about the RFP, contact Alexandra Church at achurch@cityofnewburgh-ny.gov