

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

City of Rutland – Strategic Plan for Downtown Rutland

ISSUE DATE:	July 25, 2019	
QUESTIONS DUE BY:	August 20, 2019	4:00pm (EDT)
DUE DATE and TIME:	August 27, 2019	4:00pm (EDT)

SCOPE AND BACKGROUND: On behalf of the City of Rutland, the Rutland Redevelopment Authority (RRA) is seeking a qualified consultant (vendor) to conduct a market analysis and strategic plan for the Special Benefits District of Downtown Rutland, VT.

The market analysis and strategic plan will shape a vision and develop tangible economic goals, build on the district's strengths and unique competitive advantages; and mitigate against the district's weaknesses. This insight into the economic conditions of the downtown will allow the RRA, Downtown Rutland Partnership, and other development organizations to establish an effective and informed plan for continued growth.

The bid winner will be selected by a steering committee comprised of board members of the Rutland Redevelopment Authority (RRA) and Downtown Rutland Partnership (DRP). The RRA and DRP will provide project administration and oversight for this project.

This project is being partially funded through a VCDP planning grant and a grant from National Life Group Foundation Main Street grant.

Please see the **Scope of Work** section for additional details.

1. OVERVIEW:

- 1.1. **POINT OF CONTACT:** All communications concerning this Request for Proposal (RFP) are to be addressed in writing to the attention of: Brennan Duffy, Executive Director, Rutland Redevelopment Authority at duffyrra@rutlandvtbusiness.com , 1 Strongs Avenue, Rutland, VT 05701. Mr. Duffy is the sole contact for this proposal.
- 1.2. **CONTRACT PERIOD:** Contracts arising from this RFP will be for a period of 1 year with an option, upon end of initial contract, for the City and Vendor to enter into a continuing service period. Please see the **Scope of Work** section for additional details on anticipated timeframe.
- 1.3. **QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD:** Any vendor requiring clarification of any section of this proposal, or other portion of the RFP, must submit specific questions in writing no later than

August 20, 2019. Questions may be e-mailed to duffyrra@rutlandvtbusiness.com. Written responses to all questions submitted will be posted on the RRA web site at rutlandvtbusiness.com following the question submission deadline.

2. DETAILED REQUIREMENTS:

Proposals will be evaluated based upon their responsiveness to the RFP and its stated evaluation criteria. An award will be made that represents the best interest of the City of Rutland and RRA. Vendors must demonstrate that they have the organization, experience, technical skill, equipment, financial resources, and proven ability to provide the service and products required.

The RRA, on behalf of the City, reserves the right to accept or reject any and all proposals. Proposals will be reviewed and vendor selection decision made by a steering committee consisting of applicable stakeholders. Vendors may be asked to provide additional information and detail to their proposal and may be invited to meet with the steering committee in person to provide additional information. A vendor selection decision is anticipated by **September, 2019**. Vendors whose proposals are not selected will be notified in writing.

The RRA, on behalf of the City, reserves the right to narrow the selection of vendors and negotiate for the best and final offer until a contract agreement can be reached with the vendor which represents the best interests of the City of Rutland and RRA.

2.1. **CONFIDENTIALITY:** The successful response will become part of the contract file and will become a matter of public record, as will all other responses received. If the response includes material that is considered by the bidder to be proprietary and confidential under 1 VSA, Chapter 5, the bidder shall clearly designate the material as such, explaining why such material should be considered confidential. The bidder must identify each page or section of the response that it believes is proprietary and confidential with sufficient grounds to justify each exemption from release, including the prospective harm to the competitive position of the bidder if the identified material were to be released. Under no circumstances can the entire response or price information be marked confidential. Responses so marked may not be considered.

2.2. **CONTRACT TERMS:** The selected vendor will sign a contract to provide the items named in their responses, at the prices listed. Minimum support levels, terms, and conditions from this RFP, and the vendor's response will become part of the contract. This contract will be subject to review throughout its term. The RRA will consider cancellation upon discovery that a vendor is in violation of any portion of the agreement, including an inability by the vendor to provide the products, support, and/or service offered in their response.

2.3. **STATEMENT OF RIGHTS:** The RRA reserves the right to obtain clarification or additional information necessary to properly evaluate a proposal. Vendors may be asked to give a verbal presentation of their proposal after submission. Failure of vendor to respond to a request for additional information or clarification could result in rejection of that vendor's proposal. To secure a project that is deemed to be in the best interest of the City of Rutland and RRA, the RRA reserves the right to accept or reject any and all bids, in whole or in part, with or without cause, and to waive technicalities in submissions.

3. **SCOPE OF WORK:** The following **Scope of Work** should provide a better understanding of the needs and requirements being sought.

The City of Rutland/RRA is seeking a vendor to conduct a market analysis and strategic plan for the Special Benefits District (SBD) of Rutland City, Vermont (see Appendix 1 for map)

Specific elements of the planning study will include:

1. Trade Area – Analyze the geographic market of Rutland’s SBD to include streetscape components and housing elements. Streetscape analysis should include existing vehicular traffic conditions, pedestrian conditions, and aesthetic conditions and providing conceptual plans for the SBD street-scape environment which could enhance safety, vitality and economic activity. Housing element should include an analysis of current downtown housing inventory and a survey of potential housing space that could support future investment.
2. Demographic characteristics and trends – Define the population composition to determine the size and nature of local and regional consumer demand.
3. Sales Gap/Retail Leakage and Business Inventory analysis – Research the difference between household spending and business sales to reveal opportunities to recapture spending that is leaving the community. Assess the current business mix to reveal clusters that can be reinforced or consumer needs not being met and identify factors impeding retailers’ ability to attract shoppers, including research on local and national trends in consumer attitudes and behaviors, and interviews with existing SBD merchants and stakeholders.
4. Competitive Context – Identifying competing downtowns, commercial districts, and shopping centers to help differentiate and position Rutland’s SBD in a highly competitive regional market.
5. Transformation Strategies – Based on the marketing analysis develop and define actionable strategies to drive the economic direction for all of the initiatives. This component should include a public outreach element to include a minimum of two public engagement events to solicit feedback and information from SBD and Rutland City stakeholders and one public meeting to present the findings of the study and solicit feedback.
6. Final Report – Create and provide a Final Report of the market analysis and strategic plan to include an electronic copy and two hard copies of the document.

3.1 **TIMEFRAME TO COMPLETE:** Anticipated timeline to complete work will be six (6) months from the date of contract signing. A detailed project timetable and scope will be finalized after vendor selection.

3.2 **PROJECT BUDGET:** The budget for this project is **\$37,100.00** (thirty seven thousand and one hundred dollars). Proposals should be in the form of a fixed fee contract inclusive of all direct and indirect expenses.

4. **PROPOSAL FORMAT:**

The vendor’s proposal shall include the following sections:

Transmittal/Cover Letter: Proposals should be accompanied by a letter of transmittal acknowledging and agreeing to the provisions of this RFP, signed by individual(s) having authority to bind the individual and/or firm to sign formal contractual obligations and to verify and authenticate the commitments made by the individual and/or firm in the proposal.

Executive Summary: An outline of the services and products, summary of related cost proposal, and description of strategies for design, development, and implementation shall be provided.

Address Scope of Work: The content and format requirements listed below are the minimum required for our evaluation. They are not intended to limit the content of the proposals; vendors may include additional information or offer alternative solutions which may be considered. In general the RFP should address the key concepts of: **price, understanding of the project, timeline to deliver, ability to deliver, prior experience and expertise.**

Business Background: Statement of organization, State in which the business is incorporated, principal place of business.

Work Experience: Resumes with detailed qualifications and levels of expertise of individuals who will provide service including the account manager should be included with a clear designation. Provide a full description of the experience you and your team have had in supplying related services in the past.

References: Provide the names, addresses, and phone numbers of at least three municipalities or corporations you have transacted similar business with in the last 24 months. You must include contact names who can talk knowledgeably about your performance.

Debarment: Entities submitting proposals in response to this request must not be debarred, suspended or otherwise prohibited from professional practice by any Federal, State or Local Agency.

DUNS #: Entities submitting proposals in response to this request must have a Federal DUNS#.

5. EVALUATION CRITERIA:

The bid winner will be selected by a steering committee comprised of board members of the Rutland Redevelopment Authority (RRA) and Downtown Rutland Partnership (DRP). Proposals will be evaluated based on, but not limited to, the following criteria:

- Vendor's understanding of the work to be performed
- Prior experience / Completed work of a similar type
- Billable Rate / Price
- Experience related to specifications of work outlined in RFP
- Organizations ability to successfully conduct level of work required
- Qualifications of staff assigned to work under the contract
- Adequate staff to meet work required
- Quality of recommendation from references
- Timeframe to complete work
- Vendor presentation (only as requested)

6. SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS:

6.1 SUBMISSION: In order to be considered responsive to this RFP, each proposal shall conform to the following requirements. The Consultant shall:

Submit an electronic copy on a CD or Flash drive as well as six (6) hard copies of the proposal in a sealed envelope. Send proposals to the RRA, City of Rutland, Attn. Barbara Spaulding, 1 Strong's Avenue, Rutland, VT 05701. The proposal shall be clear, concise and brief, limited to a maximum of ten double-sided, 8 1/2" x 11" pages. Each page should include the name of vendor and page number.

Provide a cost proposal and schedule by task.

Clearly indicate the following on the outside of the sealed envelopes or packages containing the proposal:

- name and address of the vendor
- envelope contents
- "City of Rutland – Strategic Plan for Downtown Rutland"

If any of the above requirements are not met, the proposal may not be considered

6.2 CLOSING DATE: The closing date for the receipt of proposals is **4:00pm EDT August 27, 2019.**

7. DELIVERY METHODS:

- 7.1 **U.S. MAIL:** Bidders are cautioned that it is their responsibility to originate the mailing of bids in sufficient time to ensure bids are received and time stamped prior to the time of the bid closing.
- 7.2 **EXPRESS DELIVERY:** If bids are being sent via an express delivery service, be certain that the RFP designation is clearly shown on the outside of the delivery envelope or box. Express delivery packages will not be considered received until the express delivery package has been received and time stamped.
- 7.3 **HAND DELIVERY:** Hand delivery to RRA offices at 1 Strongs Ave., Rutland, VT prior to the deadline is acceptable.
- 7.4 **ELECTRONIC:** Solely electronic proposals will not be accepted.

Appendix 1 – Map of Special Benefits District, Rutland City, Vermont

