

City of Rochester
Request for Qualifications
Community Partner
Neighborhood Climate Resiliency Program

Submissions to be received by 4:00 PM
August 7, 2024

Send Submissions to:

Lia Anselm
Associate Community Housing Planner
Neighborhood and Business Development
30 Church Street, Room 005A
Rochester, NY 14614
Lia.Anselm@cityofrochester.gov

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

The City of Rochester, New York (“City”) is seeking responses to this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) (“Response”) from interested and qualified Community-Based Organizations (“CBOs”) to provide project management and oversight for programs specifically related to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (“EPA”) Community Change Grant program through a collaboration between the City’s Division of Environmental Quality and the Bureau of Business and Housing Development (the “Project”). The EPA’s Community Change Grant awards are to “support community-driven projects that build capacity for communities to tackle environmental and climate justice challenges, strengthen their climate resilience, and advance clean energy”. In addition, the target populations to be served are disadvantaged households or those who experience significant barriers to accessing climate resiliency and sustainability infrastructure or upgrades.

Background

The City of Rochester is applying for an award through the EPA Community Change Grant program that would fund a variety of projects and programs designed to improve housing opportunities, increase uptake of Federal incentives for energy efficiency upgrades by harder-to-reach populations, and reduce energy costs for current and future residents of the city of Rochester. Some of these programs and projects are already in the planning stages, and others would require a larger amount of effort on the part of the CBO(s) selected to participate. The complete NOFA is located [here](#), and the City plans to apply for a Track I award.

Eligible activities for which the City proposes to apply include:

- Funding for energy efficiency upgrades and full electrification in new small and large residential buildings, including electric vehicle charging, solar power and geothermal where applicable;
- Mitigating climate and health risks from urban heat islands and extreme heat through solar canopies on publicly accessible parking lots.
- Community education and outreach related to energy efficiency and renewable energy.
- Workforce development that supports the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and other air pollutants and increases the financial stability and growth of previously disadvantaged households.

The City intends to enter into a three-year Professional Services Agreement (PSA) with at least one CBO to provide project management and intake/implementation services for the **first three activities** above. The City’s decision as to the total number of CBOs to which it will award an Agreement will depend on the proposals received and other factors at the City’s sole discretion.

The proposed timeline for questions, submissions, decisions and other actions related to the Project:

Timeline

Activity	Time	Date
RFQ Release		Thursday, July 11, 2024
Deadline for questions		Friday, July 19, 2024
City response to questions		Wednesday, July 24, 2024
RFQ Responses due	4:00 p.m.	Wednesday, August 7, 2024
Selection Notification		Friday, August 23, 2024
Agreement Start Date		TBD if awarded; early-mid 2025

Note: Although CBOs will be notified if they are selected, and a Partnership Agreement will be signed as per EPA grant submission requirements, no award is final and no PSA can be executed unless the City is awarded funding through the EPA and both City Council approval and Mayoral signature are confirmed. The dates shown above may be subject to change within the City of Rochester’s sole discretion and upon written notification as set forth herein.

Communications

All communications by parties who have indicated an intent to submit or have submitted a Response to this RFQ (“Respondents”), including any questions or requests for clarifications, submissions, requests for status updates about the selection process, and any other inquiries whatsoever concerning this RFQ shall be sent, by email only, to the following City staff person (“City Contact”):

Lia Anselm: lia.anselm@cityofrochester.gov.

No contact is permitted with any other City staff member with regard to this RFQ during the RFQ process unless specifically authorized in writing. Prohibited contact may be grounds for disqualification.

To ensure that all Respondents have a clear understanding of the scope and requirements of this RFQ, the City will respond to all timely questions submitted via e-mail to the City Contact by the question deadline stated above. Questions and the responding answers will be sent via e-mail to all Respondents who have provided an e-mail address to the City Contact and will be posted on the City’s web page for this RFQ. The City’s failure to timely respond or provide responses to any questions shall not delay or invalidate the City’s right to make a decision to award an agreement pursuant to this RFQ.

The City will make every reasonable effort to keep Respondents informed about the process. Notifications about Timeline date changes, amendments to the RFQ, and other information about the RFQ will be sent by e-mail to Respondents who have provided an e-mail address to the City Contact and

will be posted on the City's website for this RFQ. The City's failure to provide such information shall not delay or invalidate the City's right to make a decision to award an agreement pursuant to this RFQ.

Scope of Services

In the Response, please specify which of the opportunities the Respondent is interested in and qualified to perform. The City will not deduct points for agencies who only propose to provide one or two activities.

The City is seeking CBO partners to perform at least one of the following services:

- Coordinate and provide project management services related to energy-efficiency and renewable energy upgrades to City-supported residential new construction projects concurrent with other subcontractor activities (e.g. single family and multi-family housing construction projects), including but not limited to review of contractor bids, and oversight of the contractor work while underway.
- Oversee planning and construction of solar canopies with EV charging stations in applicable publicly accessible parking lots across the city. The lots are anticipated to belong to nonprofit or community organizations near the other projects undertaken via this grant if awarded.
- Collaboration with community engagement programs, and provide education and outreach to increase awareness of existing incentive programs for energy efficiency/renewable energy, including electric vehicles, solar, and clean heating and cooling technology, etc.

Preparation and Submission Process

Responses must be postmarked or received by the City no later than Wednesday, August 14, 2024. Submit a digital copy to:

Lia Anselm, Associate Community Housing Planner
Neighborhood and Business Development
30 Church Street, Room 005A, Rochester, NY 14614
Lia.Anselm@cityofrochester.gov

This RFQ is designed to facilitate the evaluation and selection of Respondents that are best able to achieve the City's objectives. The Response shall contain a table of contents. All pages shall be numbered and major sections and all attachments shall be referenced in the table of contents. In order to enable the City to effectively review the information contained in the submissions, submissions shall reference the paragraph title and numbered and lettered sections of the RFQ. The Response to each section shall be clearly indicated and addressed or an explanation provided for why the Respondent is not submitting for a specific section or requirement of the RFQ.

The Response shall be signed by an individual authorized to enter into and execute contracts on the Respondent's behalf. Unless otherwise specified in its Response, Respondent represents that it is

capable of meeting or exceeding all requirements specified in this RFQ. The Response shall be deemed authorization for the City to contact Respondent's references. Evaluation of Responses will be conducted by the City based on information provided in the Respondent's submitted Response and on such other available information that the City determines to be relevant. The evaluation of Responses may include an on-site assessment, meetings with authorized personnel, and may involve the use of a third-party consultant.

RFQ Respondents shall provide sufficient information in their Response to enable the City review team to make a recommendation to the Mayor. The City reserves the right to invite any or all Respondents to an interview to discuss their submission. Any expenses resulting from such an interview will be the sole responsibility of the Respondent. The City is under no obligation to select any of the Respondents or to conduct the Project described herein. The City may amend or withdraw the RFQ at any time, within its sole discretion. The City shall have no liability for any costs incurred in preparing a submissions or responding to the City's requests with respect to the submission.

Response Content

The proposal should include the following information in the order specified:

- A. Project statement: A detailed, formal description of Respondent's organization and its experience, to demonstrate competence and skill in the areas of community engagement and service delivery, and energy efficiency/sustainability, , including but not limited to the following:
 - 1. Existing relationships with City of Rochester organizations and neighborhoods;
 - 2. Credibility with the target population(s);
 - 3. Description of current services provided by the organization, including specific services related to the activity category proposed;
 - 4. Demonstrated ability to track, document, and report on results;
 - 5. Description of specific, verified outcomes and accomplishments achieved by Respondent in providing its current services related to project management, community engagement/assistance, and/or energy efficiency/sustainability related activities; and
 - 6. Experience administering grant funds, particularly government, if applicable. (Such experience is preferred but not required).
- B. Description of Services: Methodology the Respondent will use to perform the services described in this RFQ. The proposal should address, in detail, the tasks as described in the Scope of Services and the options available to households/entities applying for the funded programs.
- C. Respondent's Qualifications: Information about the Respondent and its qualifications for this Project. Include information about prior programs similar to that being solicited herein by the City, as well as households or organizations served in the past three years. Documented evidence of the Respondent's capacity to perform the work, including references, contact names, and phone numbers.

- D. Project personnel: The name and resume of the Respondent's lead person for the Project. Names, resumes, and roles of all staff who will be involved in the Project. Provide data on the diversity of Respondent's overall workforce, including total number of employees, and percentages of minorities and females employed. If the organization will increase capacity to provide this level of service, please describe how this expansion will be accomplished, including a specific time line, the number of staff to be hired (include staff resumes where possible), and describe how this activity will complement your organization's existing activities.
- E. Subcontractors: Names, resumes, and roles of sub-contractors, associates, or any non-employees who will be involved in the Project.
- F. Rochester presence: Information about Respondent's presence in the City of Rochester and/or any collaborative relationships with local firms that are to be formed for this Project.
- G. Minority/Women-owned Business Enterprise (MWBE): Although the PSA can only be made with a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, representation is an important factor. Please provide a description as to the percentage of the workforce utilized to perform the work of this contract who will be either Minority (M) or Women (W), including both the Respondent's workforce and that of any subcontractors who will be utilized.

Evaluation Criteria

The following is a summary of the evaluation criteria. It is within the City's sole discretion to determine the value assigned to each of these criteria.

- Proposal: The Respondent's comprehension of the needs of the City to accomplish the goals of the overall Project as demonstrated by its description of its approach to its program proposal.
- Experience: The Respondent's relevant experience in providing the same or similar services.
- References: Evaluation of the Respondent's previous work and impact in the areas noted for participation in the project.
- Commitment of key principals to the Project: Demonstration of availability of senior-level staff or associates to be assigned to this Project to ensure depth, accountability, and diversity of perspective.

MWBE and Workforce Goals: The City of Rochester desires to encourage minority and women owned (MWBE) businesses to participate in opportunities to enter into PSAs with the City and to encourage minorities and women in the workforce. Pursuant to Ordinance No. 2018-54, the City has a goal that 30% of the aggregate annual contract awards for professional service contracts over \$10,000 be awarded to minorities (M) (15%) and women (W) (15%). The City has also established minority workforce goals of 20% M and 6.9% W for professional services consulting contracts. For more information please see <http://www.cityofrochester.gov/mwbe>.

Respondents shall be awarded MWBE bonus weighting as follows:

1. The City will give preference to Respondents who are New York State certified MWBEs. Respondents who meet this requirement shall receive **an additional weighting of 10%**.
2. The City will give preference to Respondents who utilize state certified MWBE subcontractors with bona fide offices and operations in the Empire State Development Finger Lakes Region, which includes the following counties: Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Orleans, Seneca, Wayne, Wyoming and Yates. State-certified MWBEs from outside the Region may be counted if there are insufficient businesses in the Region to perform the specialized work or consulting services required. If one or more MWBE subcontractors will perform 10% to 20% of the work of the contract – measured as either a percent of the total contract amount or as a percent of the total full-time-equivalent labor hours budgeted for this project, the Respondent shall receive **an additional weighting of 5%**. If MWBE subcontractors will perform more than 20% of the work of the contract, the Respondent shall receive an **additional weighting of 10%**.
3. Respondents shall provide sufficient documentation with their submissions to support the additional preference weighting as an MWBE Respondent or for use of MWBE subcontractors. If one or more MWBE subcontractors are proposed, they must be named and the size of the subcontract identified. If selected, the Respondent shall submit an MWBE Utilization Plan on the City’s form for approval by the MWBE Officer. Once approved, the Utilization Plan shall be incorporated into the PA.
 - a. If the total amount of a PSA is increased by 5% or more at any time during the term of the PSA, the Respondent shall submit a revised MWBE Utilization Plan for approval by the MWBE Officer. The MWBE Officer may also issue a revised MWBE Utilization Plan for unforeseen changes in the availability of MWBE subcontractors during the term of the PSA.
4. The City will give preference to Respondents who meet or exceed the City’s workforce goals, which are: 20% M and 6.9% W. Respondents who demonstrate that their and/or their subcontractors’ workforce on this Project meets or exceeds these goals shall receive an **additional weighting of 10%**. If selected, the Respondent shall submit a Workforce Staffing Plan on the City’s Form for review by the MWBE Officer. Once reviewed, the Workforce Staffing Plan shall be incorporated into the PSA. The calculated percentages of workforce utilization shall be based on actual hours worked and billed over the term of the project. The final determination of a workforce goals accomplished during the contract shall be based on hours reported in the workforce utilization reports.
5. If selected, the Respondent shall provide MWBE utilization and subcontractor/supplier payment certification and/or workforce utilization reports on the City’s forms. These reports shall be submitted with each invoice or as otherwise requested by the MWBE Officer.
6. A failure to submit the required subcontractor/supplier payment certification and/or workforce utilization reports shall constitute a default in the performance of the Agreement subject to potential termination for default by the City. In addition, if the selected Respondent fails to meet the most recent MWBE Utilization Plan and/or Workforce Staffing Plan, for which additional weight was awarded by the end of the PSA, such failure may result in disqualification from award of future contracts with the City.
7. Summary of additional evaluation weighting points for MWBE and Workforce Goals:

Category of Additional Evaluation Points	Additional Weight Awarded
Respondent is New York State Certified MWBE	10%
Utilize MWBE Subcontractors for 10-20% of work	5%

Utilize MWBE Subcontractors for more than 20% of work	10%
Meet or exceed workforce goals of 20% M and 6.9% W	10%

City of Rochester location preference: The City favors contracting with firms located in the City of Rochester and a preference will be given to Respondents located in the City, through an additional weighting of 10%. Non-local firms may wish to consider partnerships or other collaborative arrangements with local firms as a strategy to address this criterion.

Other Criteria: Other criteria may be considered and evaluated by the City if it is determined to be in the best interest of the City and the success of the Project to do so.

The selection of a CBO partner(s) is within the City’s sole discretion and no reasons for rejection or acceptance of a submission are required to be given. The decision will be based on qualifications and compliance with the requirements of this RFQ. The City reserves the right to reject any or all submissions or to accept a submission that does not conform to the terms set forth herein. The City further reserves the right to waive or modify minor irregularities in the submissions and negotiate with Lenders to serve the City’s best interest.

Miscellaneous

The City reserves the right to amend or withdraw this RFQ in the City’s sole discretion, including any timeframes herein, upon notification of all Respondents as set forth above, and in such case, the City shall have no liability for any costs incurred by any Respondent. The City may request additional information from any Respondent to assist the City in making its evaluation.

The submission and all additional materials submitted shall become property of the City and will be subject to NYS Freedom of Information Law. If any proprietary information is submitted, it must be clearly identified and a request to keep such information confidential must be submitted. Submission shall constitute a binding offer by Respondent to provide the services at the prices described therein until such time as the parties enter into a Professional Services Agreement.