

City of Rochester
Request for Proposals
Peer Navigators for the Crisis Intervention Services Unit

Proposals to be received by **12:00 PM**

March 7, 2025

Submit Proposals to:

Sarah Fletcher

Deputy Commissioner

Department of Recreation and Human Services

City of Rochester

57 St. Paul St

Rochester, NY 14604

Sarah.Fletcher@CityofRochester.Gov

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

The City of Rochester is seeking proposals from a qualified Consultant (“Consultant”) to recruit, hire, train, and supervise Peer Navigators who will work in the Crisis Intervention Services Unit. Additionally, the Consultant will assist the City of Rochester in building out the specific work that the Peer Navigators will perform in the unit (the “Project”).

BACKGROUND

The City of Rochester (City) launched the Crisis Intervention Services Unit (CISU) within the Department of Recreation and Human Services (DHRS) in the fall of 2020 after receiving calls from the community to have a different, non-police response to mental health crises. At the time, the Unit was to include the newly-formed homicide response (HRT) and Person in Crisis (PIC) teams, as well as the Rochester Police Department’s Family Crisis Intervention Team (FACIT) and Victim Assistance Unit (VAU). The thinking behind the creation of the original unit was that it would enable DRHS to offer the community non-law enforcement support during crises as well as a human services approach to assisting crime victims. Since then, the Unit has been reconfigured and condensed into three teams -- the HRT, PIC, and the Community Support Team (CST), formerly the FACIT and VAU teams. The goal of the CISU is to provide comprehensive, community-based response to support victims and families dealing with homicides, mental health, domestic violence, and other related crises. To find out more about the CISU, please visit: <https://www.cityofrochester.gov/departments/department-recreation-and-human-services/crisis-intervention-services>

The City recognizes that involving peers is a best practice when supporting individuals in mental health crises, experiencing substance use disorders, or facing similar challenges. With this understanding, in 2021-2022, the City partnered with the Finger Lakes Performing Provider System (FLPPS) and an external organization to hire four (4) full-time Peers to collaborate with the PIC team. This initiative highlighted the significant impact Peers can have on the team's work, prompting the City to allocate funding for one (1) full-time and one (1) part-time Peer Navigator as City employees. These Peers are tasked with leveraging their lived experiences—such as mental health challenges, substance use disorders, homelessness, or related issues—to assist during PIC calls and provide intensive case management for individuals who frequently rely on PIC services. The City has since received grant funding to support another full-time Peer who could assist youth who have had a death of a loved one from homicide. The thinking is that the Peer may have lost a close family member to homicide and could use that experience to provide individual case management and/or support group services to youth going through a similar grieving process. Currently, the PIC team has one (1) full-time Peer Navigator who supports their work by going on calls and providing follow-up case management. However, despite a few attempts, the City has not been able to recruit and hire additional Peers to support the CIS. As such, the City is seeking a Consultant with expertise in working with Peers to support their recruitment, hiring, and supervision.

Additionally, the Consultant could help refine and expand upon the initial concepts for Peer roles to enhance their impact on the individuals served by CIS. Ideally, the Peer will share similar lived experiences with the client they are assisting, using that perspective to guide the client through their crisis and connect them with appropriate referrals for long-term support. New York State now recognizes certifications as Peer Specialists, Family Peer Advocate, and Recovery Peer Advocate. To that end, the City expects that the selected Consultant will have expertise in hiring and supervising peers with any of these certifications and/or working with those who have personal experience with the loss of a close family member due to homicide, being a victim of a crime, having a mental health illness, homelessness or lack of housing, recovery, and/or any combination of those mentioned lived experiences.

In this Request for Proposals (RFP), the City has set aside \$155,000 for a professional service agreement (PSA – **Attachment A**) with a Consultant who has the experience and expertise in recruiting, hiring, and supervising peers. Ideally, the selected Consultant will also have experience with working with peers with various types of lived experiences and in planning the role of peers in a mobile crisis response team. The City is expecting that the peers will make a positive impact on the work of the Crisis Intervention Services Unit by being able to assist community members in crisis, with the goal that they no longer need the support of the CIS unit.

TIMELINE

Activity	Time	Date
RFP Release	9:00 AM	1/6/2025
Deadline for questions	12:00 PM	1/20/2025
Response for questions submitted	5:00 PM	2/3/2025
Proposals due	12:00 PM	3/7/2025
Consultant Selection and Award Notification		3/21/2025
City Council Approval of agreement with Consultant	6:00 PM	5/20/2025
Agreement Start Date		6/15/2025

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 proposal in response to this RFP ("Respondents"), including any questions or requests for clarifications, submission of the proposal, requests for status updates about the proposal selection process and any other inquiries whatsoever concerning this RFP shall be sent, in writing, to the following City staff person ("City Contact"):

Sarah Fletcher, Deputy Commissioner
Department of Recreation and Human Services
City of Rochester
57 St. Paul St
Rochester, NY 14604

No contact is permitted with any other City staff member with regard to this RFP during the RFP 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 RFP, 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 RFP. 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 RFP.

The City will make every reasonable effort to keep Respondents informed about the RFP process. Notifications about Timeline date changes, amendments to the RFP and other information about the RFP 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 RFP. 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 RFP.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

The City is seeking the services of a Consultant to provide assistance with creating a plan for the work of the Peer Navigators in the Crisis Intervention Services (CIS) Unit along with the recruitment, hiring, and supervision of the Peer Navigators. The Respondent's proposal shall address each of the requested services, using the same identifying language, including any paragraph or section numbers or letters as used in the RFP.

1. Review the City's Peer Navigator job description and provide feedback and recommendations on what work the Peer Navigators could be doing to enhance their impact in the community
2. Recruit New York State-Certified Peers that may fit the role outlined in number 1 above
3. Interview and hire Peer Navigators
4. Provide the Peer Navigators with frequent supervision and professional development training
5. Ensure that the Peer Navigators maintain their certification throughout their employment
6. Any additional services that the Respondent can provide to the City with regards to the Peer Navigators working with the CIS unit

PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION PROCESS

Proposals must be postmarked or received by the City no later than **March 7, 2025 at 12:00 PM**. All proposals shall be in PDF format and emailed to the address listed below. The email with the proposal as the attachment shall have the subject as "Respondent's Name – Peer Navigator Proposal".

Sarah Fletcher, Deputy Commissioner
Department of Recreation and Human Services
City of Rochester
Sarah.Fletcher@CityofRochester.Gov

This RFP is designed to facilitate the evaluation and selection of a Consultant that is best able to achieve the City's objectives. The proposal shall be no longer than ten (10) pages, excluding attachments, with 1-inch margins and 12 pt. Times New Roman font.

All pages shall be numbered including 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 proposals, proposals shall reference the numbered and lettered sections of the RFP. The response to each section shall be clearly indicated and addressed or an explanation provided for why the Respondent is not submitting a proposal for a specific section or requirement of the RFP.

Each proposal shall be signed by an individual authorized to enter into and execute contracts on the Respondent's behalf. Unless otherwise specified in its proposal, Respondent represents that it is capable of meeting or exceeding all requirements specified in this RFP.

Submission of a proposal shall be deemed authorization for the City to contact Respondent's references. Evaluation of proposals will be conducted by the City based on information provided in the Respondent's proposals and on such other available information that the City determines to be relevant.

The evaluation of proposals may include an on-site assessment, meetings with authorized personnel, and may involve the use of a third-party consultant.

The Respondent selected by the City will be required to enter into a Professional Services Agreement (PSA) with the City (see **Attachment A**, the City's standard PSA form). The establishment of a PSA is contingent upon approval by City Council for all Agreements in excess of \$20,000 or for a period of more than one year and upon the availability of funds for such an agreement. Unless otherwise stated in the proposal, the Respondent's response to this RFP shall be deemed its acceptance of the terms of this PSA. (Note: Attention is directed to the City's Living Wage requirements and MWBE and Workforce Utilization Goals)

Respondents shall provide sufficient information in their written proposals 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 proposal. 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 responding Respondents or to conduct the Project described herein. The City may amend or withdraw the RFP at any time, within its sole discretion. The City shall have no liability for any costs incurred in preparing a proposal or responding to the City's requests with respect to the proposal.

PROPOSAL CONTENT

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

1. Executive Summary: one-page executive summary, which should be included in the overall page limit, and summarizes:
 - a. The Respondent's understanding of the Project and unique value the Respondent will bring to the Project
 - b. The Respondent's relevant experience working with Peer Navigators
 - c. The Respondent's relevant experience working in mobile crisis response, if any
 - d. Names, titles, and relevant experience of key staff who will be working on the Project
 - e. If applicable, the name of any subcontractors the Respondent plans to work with and their role on the Project
2. Description of Services: The proposal should address, in detail, how the Respondent plans on completing the tasks as described in the Scope of Services, identified by numbered or lettered sections.
3. Timeline: Describe in detail the time it will take to complete all of the tasks outlined in the Scope of Services Section of this RFP.
4. Respondent's Qualifications: Information about the Respondent and its qualifications for this Project. If applicable, include information about the Respondent's experience with using peers to engage people experiencing a crisis. Documented evidence of the Respondent's capacity to perform the work, including, if applicable, references, contact names, and phone numbers.

5. Knowledge of Issues Facing City of Rochester Residents: Outline the Respondent's understanding and knowledge of relevant issues facing the Rochester community. Many of these issues are prevalent in the lives of the clients that the City serves, and therefore any peers working with community members will also need to be aware of these issues.
6. Project Budget: Prepare a budget with items including staff time, equipment, indirect, etc. Also include a budget narrative that describes how the Consultant calculated the proposed budget item. The budget shall not exceed \$155,000 and the indirect shall be no more than 10%.
7. 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.
8. Subcontractors, if applicable: Names, resumes, and roles of sub-contractors, associates, or any non-employees who will be involved in the Project. Outline the role that the subcontractor will have in the project.
9. MWBE: Statement as to whether or not the Respondent is a New York State-certified minority or women-owned business enterprise (MWBE) firm, will use bona fide MWBE subcontractors and 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 Consultant's workforce and that of any subcontractors who will be utilized.
 - a. **Attachment B**: City of Rochester MWBE Utilization form
 - b. **Attachment C**: City of Rochester Workforce Utilization form

EVALUATION CRITERIA

The following is a summary of the proposal 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 as demonstrated by its description of its approach to the elements listed in the Scope of Services section of this RFP.

Experience: The Respondent's relevant experience working with peers in a community setting.

Understanding of Rochester: The Respondent's knowledge and understanding of the issues faced by Rochester residents.

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 Consultants who are New York State certified MWBEs. Consultants who meet this requirement shall receive **an additional weighting of 10%**.
2. The City will give preference to Consultants 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 consultant shall receive **an additional weighting of 5%**. If MWBE subcontractors will perform more than 20% of the work of the contract, the Consultant shall receive an **additional weighting of 10%**.
3. Respondents shall provide sufficient documentation with their proposal to support the additional preference weighting as an MWBE Consultant 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 PSA.
 - a. If the total amount of a PSA is increased by 5% or more at any time during the term of the PSA, the Consultant 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 Consultants who meet or exceed the City's workforce goals, which are: 20% M and 6.9% W. Consultants 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%

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 Consultant is within the City's sole discretion and no reasons for rejection or acceptance of a proposal are required to be given. Although costs are an important consideration, the decision will be based on qualifications and compliance with the requirements of this RFP and not solely on cost. The City reserves the right to reject any or all proposals or to accept a proposal that does not conform to the terms set forth herein. The City further reserves the right to waive or modify minor irregularities in the proposals and negotiate with Consultants to serve the City's best interest.

MISCELLANEOUS

The City reserves the right to amend or withdraw this RFP 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 proposal and all materials submitted with the proposal shall become property of the City and will be subject to NYS Freedom of Information Law. If any proprietary information is submitted with the proposal, it must be clearly identified and a request to keep such information confidential must be submitted.

Submission of a proposal 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 PSA.