

Request for Qualifications



The City of Weslaco is seeking to enter into a planning services contract with a qualified planning consultant. The City of Weslaco will receive sealed envelopes containing Statements of Qualifications for planning services and project management for development and completion of a new comprehensive plan. Statements of Qualifications will be accepted until Monday, April 21, 2014 at 3:00 P.M. ANY RESPONSE RECEIVED AFTER THAT TIME WILL NOT BE OPENED AND WILL BE RETURNED.

RFQ NO. 2013-14-05 Professional Consultant Planning Services for

City of Weslaco's
Comprehensive Plan

Deliver Submittal to:
Homer Rhodes
City of Weslaco
255 South Kansas Avenue
Weslaco, Texas 78596

The Submittal Envelope Must Show the Submittal Number, Name and Deadline Date.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: City of Weslaco is requesting that all questions be routed to: Mardoqueo Hinojosa, P.E., Interim Planning & Code Enforcement Director/City Engineer. Questions may be faxed to (956) 973-3128 or emailed to mhinojosa@weslacotx.gov WRITTEN QUESTIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED NO LATER THAN Wednesday, April 9, 2014. Responses will be sent to all applicants by email by Wednesday, April, 16, 2014.

The following outlines the Request for Qualifications:

SECTION I GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

NON-COLLUSION: Applicants, by submitting a signed submission, certify that the accompanying submission is not the result of, or affected by, any unlawful act of collusion with any other person or company engaged in the same line of business or commerce, or any other fraudulent act punishable under Texas or United State Law.

NON-DISCRIMINATION: Submitters, during the performance of this contract, will not discriminate against any employee or applicant of employment because of race, religion, sex, national origin or disability is a bona fide occupational qualification reasonably necessary to the normal operation of the contractor.

ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION OF BIDS: City of Weslaco's Purchasing Department will not accept telegraphic or electronically transmitted submissions.

PROOF OF FINANCIAL AND BUSINESS CAPABILITY: Submitters must, upon request, furnish satisfactory evidence of their ability to furnish products or services in accordance with the terms and conditions of these specifications. The City of Weslaco will make final determination as to the vendor's ability.

SUBMITTER DEFAULT: The City of Weslaco reserves the right, in case of submitter default, to procure the articles or services from other sources and hold the defaulting vendor responsible for any excess costs occasioned thereby.

RESTRICTIVE OR AMBIGUOUS SPECIFICATIONS: It is the responsibility of the submitter to review the request for qualifications (RFQ) packet and to notify the Purchasing Department if the specifications are formulated in a manner that would unnecessarily restrict competition. Any such protest or question regarding the specifications must be received in the Purchasing Department not less than seventy-two hours (72) prior to the time set for the opening. These requirements also apply to specifications that are ambiguous.

RESPONSE DELIVERY: City of Weslaco requires submitters, when hand delivering qualifications, to time date and stamp the envelope before depositing it in the bid box.

SIGNING OF QUALIFICATIONS: To be considered all submittals must be signed. Please sign the original in blue ink.

WAIVING OF INFORMALITIES: City of Weslaco reserves the right to waive minor informalities or technicalities when it is in the best interest of the City of Weslaco.

SUBCONTRACTING: The successful submitter may not subcontract the award without the written consent of City of Weslaco's City Commission.

SECTION II RESPONSE REQUIREMENTS

TECHNICAL RESPONSE: The required contents and limitation for the preparation of the technical response are described in this section. Failure to provide the requested information or adhere to any state limitations will result in disqualification of the submittal proposal. A total of one (1) original and five (5) copies of the Technical Response shall be submitted to the address on the cover letter.

CONTENTS: The required contents for the Technical Response are presented below in the order they should be incorporated into the submitted document.

UNDERSTANDING THE PROPOSED PROJECT: This section should demonstrate that the Planning Professional understands project needs, work required, and any local issues or concerns. This description should be concise, straight, and limited to three (3) pages in length.

FIRM QUALIFICATIONS: The City of Weslaco is seeking to contract with a competent planning firm, who has had experience in the following areas:

- Preparation of comprehensive/general plans
- Preparation of parks master plans
- With local Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
- Land use studies
- Annexation
- Economic development and redevelopment
- Housing studies
- Traffic plans, traffic counts and thoroughfare plans
- Public facilities and infrastructure
- Planning and financing

The Firm Qualifications will be limited to a one (1) page limitation for the Project Manager/Planner experience and one (1) page limitation per firm/Sub-provider qualifications.

Additionally, for the firm and each sub-provider, a client contract name and phone number should be included for reference purposes relating to each project submitted under qualification. This project list is limited to one (1) page in length.

PROJECT TEAM: The consultant should provide an organizational chart, identifying one Project Planner/Project Manager for the firm and each sub-provider. There is a one (1) page limitation to this organizational chart.

An appendix section should be included to present the resume of the project manager, assistant project manager and key individuals with the firm that will be working on project. Resumes for the key individual sub-provider managers should

also be included – if sub-providers are part of the team.

REQUIRED CERTIFICATION AND SUBMITTAL: This section will contain any certification and assurance as required by City of Weslaco. The planning firm should add copies of their insurance.

PLANNING FIRMS ARE NOT TO PROVIDE A FEE PROPOSAL WITH THIS SUBMITTAL: The fee will be negotiated in accordance with the Professional Services Procurement Act, TX. Govt. Code Ann. § 2254.001, et seq.

NUMBER OF COPIES TO BE SUBMITTED: City of Weslaco requires one (1) original submittal and five (5) copies.

SECTION III- SELECTION AND SCHEDULES

SELECTION PROCEDURES: The Technical Response shall be submitted according to the schedule below. The respondent should be able to submit a Cost Proposal on short notice at a later time.

RESPONSE RANKING: A City of Weslaco will evaluate and score each of the RFQs in accordance with the evaluation criteria. City staff will present a shortlist to the City Commission based on the evaluation criteria along with their recommended ranking to the City Commission for approval and authorization to continue. The Mayor and City Commission reserve the right to request formal presentations and/or supplemental information from each provider on the shortlist. The Mayor and City Commission may: (1) approve the Selection Committee's ranking recommendation; or (2) rank the most highly qualified providers from the shortlist based on RFQ responses, formal presentations, and/or supplemental information. The City reserves the right to select multiple providers for multiple projects.

NEGOTIATION PROCESS: Negotiations will be initiated with the most highly qualified provider selected by the City Commission to design a detailed scope of work and services including a fee proposal along with a cost breakdown for further consideration. If a mutually satisfactory agreement cannot be reached with the selected provider, negotiations will be formally terminated along with a request to the City Commission requesting authorization to proceed with negotiations with the next most highly qualified provider. This process will be repeated as necessary until a mutually satisfactory agreement is reached. When such an agreement is reached, a recommendation will be made to the City Commission requesting authorization to execute a contract pursuant to the agreement and subject to the availability of funding. The City of Weslaco reserves the right to reject any and all proposals.

PROPOSAL SUBMITTED TO: One (1) original and five (5) copies of the Responses must be submitted, via mail or by hand delivery, to:

City of Weslaco Purchasing Office
Attn: Homer Rhodes
City of Weslaco
255 South Kansas Ave.
Weslaco, Texas 78596

Proposals must be received by no later than Monday, April 21, 2014 at 3:00 P.M.

EVALUATION: The evaluation system consists of a 100-point ranking system. The firms will be short-listed from this evaluation.

PROJECT SCOPE OF WORK

A. INTRODUCTION

The City of Weslaco is performing a request for qualifications from any and all parties wishing to be considered for consulting of professional services related to updating/creating a new comprehensive and parks plan.

The original Comprehensive Plan was created in 1990 and most recently updated in May of 2008. The plan was updated by Wilbur Smith and Associates in conjunction with City Staff and the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee and primarily addresses future land uses with specific recommendations broken down by neighborhood areas. It is envisioned that the new plan will identify new community goals and objectives while also adding pertinent elements from existing plans and community input to make the plan truly comprehensive in scope. The proposed comprehensive plan would also address issues that pertain to the community as it approaches build-out, currently projected for 2030. After a community review and incorporation of the vision, goals and objectives into the new plan, the resulting implementation framework would involve calibrating the goals and objectives of the comprehensive plan into the current strategic planning process and a new five-year capital improvements plan (CIP).

B. BACKGROUND

The City of Weslaco located in Hidalgo County consists of 14.80 square miles with a population of 35,670 residents (2010 Census). Weslaco is known as the "The City on the Grow" because of the City's rapid expansion in residential development and commercial business. Its central location in the Rio Grande Valley makes it a primary location for tourist.

The City of Weslaco's Mission Statement is: "Commitment to Excellence in Public Service: Positive Attitude of Courtesy & Concern, Doing it Right the First Time, Sensitive to the citizens' needs, Friendly Respect for All, Service without Hassle".

The South Texas College (STC) campus is located in center of the City. STC offers certificate, associate, and bachelor's degrees for a variety of different career fields. General Education courses are also offered at the college.

The Valley Grande Institute for Academic Studies is located in downtown Weslaco and has been in operation for 21 years. The Valley Grande Institute is dedicated to training medical professional to work in doctors' offices, nursing homes, pharmacies and other fascinating medical settings.

The City of Weslaco offers a diverse selection of public, private and charter schools,

including two IDEA Academy's one of which is currently under construction. Knapp Medical Center is a not-for-profit, acute care hospital in South Texas providing exceptional healthcare service to residents of the Rio Grande Valley.

Weslaco has a large number of retirees and "Winter Texans" that are vital to the City's economy. The City has two nature parks the Valley Nature Center, currently under renovation and the Estero Llano Grande State Park. The City's historical downtown, museums, parks and other recreational opportunities are important amenities for our residents and Winter Texans.

C. Community Input

Community input will be essential to the development of the Comprehensive Plan. A series of community meetings will need to be held to solicit public input. There will also be public hearings before the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Commission to consider the draft plan and the eventual adoption of the plan.

Staff would prefer to have several community input meetings with each meeting focusing on different elements of the plan (i.e. land use & growth, economic development & revitalization, parks and recreation master plan, housing, public facilities & infrastructure/cost of development, etc.) to provide the public time for extensive input in to each component of the plan.

The consultant is expected to be in charge of these public meetings and to facilitate and guide each meeting to obtain specific and focused input to assist them in preparation of a draft plan that addresses all the issues and perceived needs that are a consensus of what the community desires in the final plan.

D. The Project

Professional services required of the successful consulting firm will include analyzing the City's existing environment, facilitating community groups to identify a desired future environment, developing City goals and objectives, and producing a prioritized action/implementation plan and recommendations that will accomplish the goals and objectives in order to reach the desired future environment.

The updated comprehensive plan should include the following;

1. INTRODUCTION

- a) What is the Comprehensive Plan?
- b) What is the planning area?
- c) Weslaco's regional location in the Rio Grande Valley

- d) Public input process
- e) Timeline/work program to develop the plan
- f) Using the Comprehensive Plan
- g) Organization of the plan document

2. COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

The plan should accurately depict existing community conditions and articulate a vision of what the community wants to be in the future. Through its goals and objectives, the plan will also set a framework to assist City staff in the future land use and development decisions to provide quality and orderly development throughout the City. By establishing the community's vision, goals, objectives and policies the desired framework will be provided to direct how growth and development should occur within the planning area.

Through public input determine what the community vision is that will make the City better than what now exists. The plan should be community based, action oriented and user friendly.

3. EXISTING LAND USE

A study and inventory needs to be done of the City's existing land uses and land use patterns. Current land use maps should be confirmed and reproduced in electronic format (GIS and PDF). Coordination with city staff might be required for this task. 2008 Comprehensive Plan will be provide for reference purposes.

4. SOCIOECONOMIC DATA

This data can be included in the plan or as an appendix to the plan.

5. FUTURE LAND USE DEVELOPMENT

This portion of the land use element needs to provide direction for growth, development and redevelopment to occur within the planning area. A "land use map" that graphically depicts proposed future land uses throughout the planning area and text describing how the area should develop will be included in this section. Both the land use map and text are intended to be used simultaneously in making future decisions about future growth throughout the City and the ETJ.

6. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

This section should provide a set of strategies for both strengthening and diversifying the City's economy with a focus on retail, commercial and industrial development and revitalization of the downtown through redevelopment and infill. The City wants to attract new job creating businesses and be able to train the community's workforce for current and future labor needs.

7. DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION PLAN

Weslaco's downtown and the Old Original Town Site, like many throughout Texas, began when the railroad came to this area.

Weslaco is part of the Texas Main Street program administered by the Texas Historical Commission and is affiliated with the National Main Street Center. The City has a number of programs to promote and market the historic downtown which area facilitated by the Weslaco Economic Development Corporation.

The downtown and old areas surrounding the downtown have many locations available for infill development. There is a strong desire to see revitalization of infill properties, empty historic buildings and dilapidated structures and properties in this area.

One of the goals in this plan would be to choose an area, a property or a building and develop a Specific Plan or Area Plan for a revitalization project. This plan would have to include all the details needed to implement the proposed revitalization (i.e. design, proposed use, strategies & options on how the project would be financed, construction & infrastructure costs, etc.) This plan could be included as an appendix to the Comprehensive Plan.

8. HOUSING

A housing needs assessment will need to be done to ascertain what the future housing needs for the community will be.

9. PARKS, OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

The City currently has 7 parks and open spaces. Additionally, the City has two municipal swimming pools, golf course, a service center, several sports complexes which host a variety of youth and adult leagues and 2.0 miles of trails. The City seeks to determine how to best meet the future parks and recreation needs of its citizens through enhancements to existing parks and acquisition of additional parkland. This effort is intended to result in a plan that identifies parks and recreational needs for the City of Weslaco, policy approaches to achieve overall goals, and a likely capital program for park enhancements into the foreseeable future.

10. THOROUGHFARE PLAN

The City's Long Range Thoroughfare Plan will need to address circulation within the City on surface streets (arterials, collectors & local) analyzing existing conditions and future needs to determine linkages between land uses. The aim is to provide a circulation system that is safe, efficient and convenient for residents and visitors. The bus system that serves the city has shall be included in this element.

11. ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING/WATER RESOURCES

Include goals and policies to protect the City's environment and water resources. Include strategies and implementation programs for complying with TECQ requirements and statutes.

12. GROWTH AREA PLAN

A map that shows and outlines boundaries of how the City's growth is projected to take place over the next 20 years needs to be included in the comprehensive plan. A projected annexation plan should be included.

13. PUBLIC FACILITIES, INFRASTRUCTURE/COST DEVELOPMENT

Provide an overview of the various public facilities and services provided by the City. It is critical for the City to have the necessary public facilities and services to support new growth and existing development as well as having adequate policies in place to determine what role the public sector plays in financing public services and facilities. Address the need for upgrading and replacement of aging infrastructure.

14. IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

The plan needs to contain effective implementation strategies. The plan will be a blueprint to guide future development in the City. Prepare an action plan with targeted time frames for recommended strategies to be implemented. It will be the responsibility of the staff to monitor the comprehensive plan's implementation

15. COMPLETION

Upon completion the consultant shall provide twenty (20) copies of the final Comprehensive Plan, including color maps, bound or placed in three-ring binder. The consultant shall also provide a MS Word and Adobe PDF copy. The future land use map and all data and information that have been collected through the process shall be provided in PDF and GIS format, as this will be the city's planning guideline.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

In the following criteria for a minimum and preferred qualifications, one year, two years, etc. experience need not consist of continuous work but may be made up of discontinuous periods of full-time work adding up to the equivalent years of full-time experience.

RESPONSE EVALUATION CRITERIA

The Provider's response will be evaluated based on the criteria presented below. These criteria will be scored on the scales shown on the enclosed "Response Evaluation Form."

1. Professional Qualifications of Team (20 points)

The firm should provide information on their proposed project planner/project manager, i.e. applicable certifications/registrations and other pertinent information that demonstrates their qualification to perform the contract. The project planner/project manager shall have experience in performing similar contracts for Municipalities as stated in the Request for Qualifications (RFQ). Similar experience gained through other clients should be substantiated by reference.

Minimum Qualifications -	One (1) Professional Planner with educational background or strong experience in urban planning and preparation of comprehensive plans.
Preferred Qualifications -	Two (2) Professional Planners with educational background or strong experience in urban planning and preparation of comprehensive plans and each Professional Planner have more than 10 years of planning experience.

2. Experience/Availability of Project Manager (30 points)

The Project Planner/Project Manager must be a city planner and have adequate experience in managing projects. The project manager's resume must be included in the appendix. Scope of relative projects must be included as well with references.

Minimum Qualifications -	The Project Planner/Project Manager must have managed 2 Municipal projects, have experience with and completing city comprehensive plans.
Preferred Qualifications -	The Project Planner/Project Manager must have managed a minimum of 5 Municipal planning projects.

3. Understanding of Project (40 points)

The response shall include the following:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the scope of services
- Address the approach to complete the scope
- Address appropriate Federal/State/Local regulations and policies

Minimum Qualifications - The response must address knowledge and experience of working with municipalities on comprehensive plans and/or other related planning issues.

Preferred Qualifications - The response must address the approach to complete the scope and identify information to be gathered or obtained and how it will be used in addition to the Minimum Qualifications above.

4. Familiarity with Applicable Rules and Regulations (10 points)

The response should indicate, through past experience of the Planning Team, that they possess sufficient knowledge of governmental regulations, appropriate codes, guidelines, professional standards and policies (as required).

Minimum Qualifications -	The response must contain a narrative that outlines applicable regulations, guidelines, standards and polices.
Preferred Qualifications -	Suitable examples of previous comprehensive plans and planning studies.