



SOUTH CENTRAL REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Planning for Our Region's Future

Bethany Branford East Haven Guilford Hamden Madison Meriden Milford
New Haven North Branford North Haven Orange Wallingford West Haven Woodbridge

Carl J. Amento, Executive Director

**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS
FOR
COMMUNITY ENAGEMENT FACILITATOR**

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July 18, 2022

1.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The South Central Regional Council of Governments (“SCRCOG”) is seeking qualifications from Consultants with expertise in community engagement and facilitation of discussions and educational forums, which will be designed to address affordable housing concepts and the recently adopted [Affordable Housing Plans](#) (“AHPs”).

The goal of this initiative is to build a growing number of community members who understand healthy housing development and policies that reflect their municipality’s needs and interests. Additionally, community members should feel their concerns have been heard so that, in coming years, there can be wide agreement among residents on their municipality’s housing needs and possible areas for future housing development.

1.2 ISSUING ORGANIZATION

SCRCOG is a regional planning organization representing fifteen (15) municipalities in South Central Connecticut. The municipalities within the region are Bethany, Branford, East Haven, Guilford, Hamden, Madison, Meriden, Milford, New Haven, North Branford, North Haven, Orange, Wallingford, West Haven and Woodbridge. The primary focus of SCRCOG is to coordinate planning on a regional basis while fostering communication and collaboration among its member municipalities in identifying and addressing regional issues.

1.3 INFORMATION AND INQUIRIES

Inquiries regarding this RFQ must be submitted in writing by Monday, August 1, 2022 and addressed to Andy Cirioli, Director of Regional Planning and Municipal Services via e-mail to: acirioli@scrcog.org.

SCRCOG will post written responses and/or any supplementary instructions in the form of written addenda at <https://scrcog.org> no later than 4:00 PM on Wednesday, August 3, 2022. It is the responsibility of the Respondent to determine whether any addenda have been issued and to ensure that all requirements of the RFQ are met prior to submittal of the qualifications. Questions will not be answered orally and questions should not be directed to municipalities.

1.4 RESPONSE DEADLINE

Submissions to this RFQ must be received by 3:00 PM on Friday, August 12, 2022.

1.5 AWARD AND REJECTION OF RESPONSES

This RFQ does not commit SCRCOG to award a contract. SCRCOG reserves the right to award this contract to the Respondent that best meets the requirements of the RFQ. SCRCOG reserves the right to accept or reject any or all responses received as a result of this request, to negotiate with all qualified applicants, or to cancel in part or in its entirety this RFQ if it is in the interests of SCRCOG.

SCRCOG may request the selected Respondent to participate in negotiations and to submit any price, technical, or other revisions to the response as a result from the negotiations.

1.6 PRIMARY PROJECT RESPONSIBILITY

The Respondent to this RFQ will be considered the lead party. It must be clearly understood that the lead party will enter into a contract with SCRCOG. All other parties will be considered sub-consultants to the lead party. The lead party is ultimately responsible for the performance of all contract work.

1.7 COST OF RESPONSE PREPARATION

No reimbursement will be made by SCRCOG for any costs incurred in the preparation of a response to this RFQ or during the selection process.

1.8 OWNERSHIP INFORMATION

SCRCOG shall have unlimited rights to use, disclose, or duplicate, for any purpose whatsoever, all information developed, derived, documented or furnished by the Respondent under any contract resulting from this RFQ. All data collected and other documentation produced as part of the contract will become the exclusive property of SCRCOG and may not be copied or removed by the Consultant or any employee of the Consultant without written permission of SCRCOG.

1.9 EQUAL OPPORTUNITY REQUIREMENTS

The Respondent awarded the contract under this RFQ, must meet all Municipal, State and Federal affirmative action and equal employment opportunity practices. This includes compliance with E.O. 11246, “Equal Employment Opportunity,” as amended by E.O. 11375, “Amending Executive Order 11246 Relating to Equal Employment Opportunity,” and as supplemented by regulations at 41 CFR part 60, “Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, Equal Employment Opportunity, Department of Labor.”

2.0 SCOPE OF SERVICES

2.1 PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The South Central Regional Council of Governments (“SCRCOG”) is proposing an initiative to engage and educate community members of the region’s municipalities on the topic of affordable housing. The Consultant is expected to facilitate honest and productive community discussions, answer questions, address misinformation, and hear the concerns of community members. Specifically, municipal leaders have expressed a need for assistance with:

- Implementing the strategies and goals outlined in their recently adopted affordable housing plans (“AHPs”), which provide analysis and guidance on how and where each municipality can address its housing needs;
- Education forums for community members on general affordable housing concepts;
- Education forums for community members on discussing the purpose and contents of the AHPs; and
- Engaging community members in discussions about their thoughts on affordable housing (i.e. their goals, concerns, and perspectives about the housing needs of their municipality).

Each participating municipality will require its own unique approach and individualized meetings and forums.

The goal of this initiative is to build a growing number of residents who understand healthy housing development and policies that reflect their municipality’s needs and interests. Additionally, community members should feel their concerns have been listened to and heard so that, in the coming years, there can be wide agreement among residents on what their municipality’s housing needs are and where housing should and should not be built.

The timeframe for this initiative is October 2022 through June 2023. SCRCOG budgeted \$35,000 for this initiative. There may be a continuation of this program into another year depending on funding and the initiative’s success and utility.

2.2 POTENTIAL SERVICES

The Consultant will work independently with each participating municipality in the region (participating municipalities to be determined) to facilitate community discussions and forums on affordable housing topics and concepts. The Consultant will be responsible for planning and facilitating in-person and virtual forums/events, developing materials and handouts for distribution, and fostering positive professional relationships with municipal leaders and community members.

Once a Consultant has been selected through this RFQ process, SCRCOG staff will work with the Consultant to develop a scope of services that best addresses the region’s needs and the needs outlined in this RFQ.

As an example, the Consultant’s scope of services may include the following tasks and deliverables:

1. Project Preparation and Initiation: The Consultant will conduct a kick-off meeting to provide an overview of the program and identify municipalities interested in the initiative. They may be other meetings to gauge municipal interest as well.

Deliverable: One (1) kick-off meeting/information session on the scope and purpose of this program. Conduct any follow-up meetings with interested municipalities. Develop a list of interested municipalities and identify 2 to 5 individuals per municipality to participate in the initiative.

2. Community Engagement Forums, Meetings, Events, and Activities: The Consultant will work closely with SCRCOG staff and municipal representatives to host forums, meetings, events, and activities designed to slowly build a growing core of understanding, beginning with a focus group of 2 to 5 people (e.g. local housing committee, planning and zoning board, or municipal staff), then increasingly adding members. Discussions will identify and address concerns and beliefs of all residents so they can find common ground and purpose, and agree on ways to proceed. The Consultant will meet monthly with each participating municipality’s focus group.

Deliverable: The Consultant will build the foundation so municipal leaders have a coalition of residents to advocate for healthy housing development and policies that reflects the municipality’s needs and interests.

3.0 RESPONSES – REQUIRED INFORMATION

Respondents are asked to submit responses in three sections: (1) Letter of Interest, (2) Experience, and (3) Staffing Plan. **Responses should not exceed 15 pages.**

3.1 LETTER OF INTEREST

The Letter of Interest must specify the following:

1. The name and mailing address of the firm responding to this RFQ.
2. Name, title, telephone number, and email addresses of the individuals within the firm authorized to commit the company to this contract.
3. Name, title, telephone number, and email addresses of the individual SCRCOG should contact regarding questions and clarifications pertaining to the firm’s RFQ response.
4. The name and mailing address of any/all proposed sub-consultants.

3.2 EXPERIENCE

Provide a written discussion of the firm’s experience in sufficient detail to demonstrate an understanding of the RFQ’s scope and the services required. Additionally, provide a detailed written summary of the firm’s history, experience, and capability in providing the services requested (specified in Section 2.0). If possible, please include a description and status of comparable work experiences.

3.3 STAFFING PLAN

Provide the professional resumes of key personnel, their background and experience, and their areas and levels of responsibility.

4.0 SUBMISSION OF RESPONSES

Responses should not exceed 15 pages.

Three (3) hardcopies and one (1) digital copy (via a flash drive) of the response to this RFQ must be addressed to Andy Cirioli, Director of Regional Planning and Municipal Services and received at the SCRCOG Office: 127 Washington Avenue, 4th Floor West, North Haven, CT 06473.

The sealed envelope must have the Respondent’s name and address and a reference to “SCRCOG RFQ – Community Engagement Facilitator”.

Submissions to this RFQ must be received by 3:00 PM on Friday, August 12, 2022. Submissions received after the date and time prescribed shall not be considered for contract award.

5.0 EVALUATION AND SELECTION

5.1 EVALUATION CRITERIA

The criteria to be used as a guideline in selecting a proposal includes the following:

- Background, prior experience, and capacity of the firm.
- Understanding of the Scope of Services and work to be performed.
- Project organization and staff commitment
- Professional expertise
- Firm’s demonstrated knowledge and familiarity with each municipality and what previous work was done in a municipality, if any.
- Clarity and conciseness of presentation.

5.2 SELECTION PROCESS

A selection panel shall review the responses and assist SCRCOG staff in choosing the successful firm.

Respondents submitting the most appropriate and competitive qualifications may be invited to an interview with a selection panel. The Respondents selected for interviews will be notified no later than Friday, August 19, 2022 and interviews will be scheduled between Wednesday, August 24, 2022 and Friday, August 26, 2022. It is anticipated that the interviews will not exceed a half-hour.

Responses to this RFQ will be reviewed against the criteria listed above in Section 5.1.

SCRCOG reserves the right to: (1) reject any or all responses, or parts thereof, for any reason, (2) negotiate changes to proposal terms, and (3) waive minor inconsistencies within the RFQ.

SCRCOG reserves the right to make selection(s) on the basis of qualifications, experience in providing similar services, and the Respondent's responsiveness to the RFQ requirements.

6.0 GENERAL PROVISIONS

- A. All work shall be performed in accordance with all Federal, State, and Municipal laws and regulations.
- B. The selected Consultant shall uphold with the highest professional standards in all dealings with residents, community stakeholders, entity officials, elected officials, public officials, SCRCOG employees, and all others when representing SCRCOG.
- C. The selected Consultant shall be responsible for identifying, certifying and adhering to any changes in Federal, State and Municipal laws and/or provisions that occur throughout the term of the Contract issued pursuant to this RFQ and the performance of the work.
- D. The selected Consultant shall provide all necessary office space, office supplies, copy and fax machines, communication devices, computer software, hardware and equipment, vehicles and any and all other items necessary to successfully complete the work contemplated in this RFQ.
- E. Services provided by the selected Consultant will be reimbursed with funds made available by CT Office of Policy and Management (OPM) in accordance with the Regional Services Grant (RSG) awarded to SCRCOG. All terms and conditions included in the agreement between SCRCOG and OPM shall be applicable to any agreement entered between SCRCOG and the selected Consultant. A copy of the agreement between SCRCOG and OPM will be incorporated and attached to the agreement between SCRCOG and the selected Consultant.

6.1 INSURANCE / INDEMNIFICATION

The selected Consultant must maintain insurance, which meets all the necessary Federal and State requirements as part of this Agreement. The specific provisions concerning Insurance and Indemnification will be outlined in the contract between the selected Consultant and SCRCOG.

6.2 DISCLAIMER

SCRCOG makes no representation or warranty and assumes no responsibility for the accuracy of the information set forth in this RFQ. Further, SCRCOG does not warrant nor make any representations as to the quality, content, accuracy or completeness of the information, text, graphics, links or other facet of this RFQ once it has been downloaded or printed from this or any server, and hereby disclaims any liability for technical errors or difficulties of any nature that may arise in connection with the website on which this RFQ is posted, or in connection with any other electronic medium utilized by respondents or potential respondents in connection with or otherwise related to the RFQ.