REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

For

DISASTER SHELTER PLAN CONSULTANT

DATA, FACILITATION, AND PLAN CREATION

For the

COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS OF HOUSTON/HARRIS COUNTY LEAD

AGENCY TO THE WAY HOME (TX-700) CONTINUUM OF CARE ON BEHALF OF

THE CITY OF HOUSTON AND HARRIS COUNTY

New Deadline for Submission: Friday, August 11, 2023, by 5:00 PM Central

Original Date Released: Friday, June 23, 2023

Date of Re-Release: Friday, July 28, 2023

New FAQ Deadline: Friday, August 4, 2023, by 5:00 PM Central
DESCRIPTION OF AGENCY SOLICITATING BID

The Way Home is the name of our local Continuum of Care (CoC), also referred to as TX-700 by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The Way Home is the collective effort to prevent and end homelessness in the cities of Houston, Pasadena, and Conroe, and throughout Harris, Fort Bend, and Montgomery counties, Texas. The Way Home comprises more than 100 partners from all areas of the community, including homeless service agencies, local governments, public housing authorities, the local Veterans Affairs office, and other nonprofits and community stakeholders. The partners of The Way Home work to make homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring in our region.

The Coalition for the Homeless of Houston/Harris County (CFTH) is the lead agency for The Way Home. Founded in 1982 and incorporated as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in 1988, the Coalition has a long-standing history as a local homeless response system leader. The Coalition acts as a catalyst, uniting partners and maximizing resources to move people experiencing homelessness into permanent housing with supportive services.

As the lead agency, the CFTH is acutely aware that people experiencing homelessness and those who are unstably housed are vulnerable in times of disaster. The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to solicit proposals from professional, qualified sources interested in creating a joint Disaster Shelter Plan on behalf of the City of Houston and Harris County. The CFTH is serving as the nonprofit payor of funding allocated for this work and seeks qualified vendors who understand the complexities of serving people who are experiencing homelessness, and other disaster-vulnerable populations, and have experience developing disaster response and recovery plans with offices of emergency management (OEM), homeless service providers, nonprofit organizations, local government agencies, and a variety of other community partners.

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

During Hurricane Harvey, more than 25,000 Houstonians sought refuge in disaster shelters. Harvey pushed the City and County shelter capacity to their limit, as a team of government officials and community volunteers – most without emergency shelter operations experience – “learned while on the job” to successfully respond to shelter demand. The experience of partnering to run shelters for two months after Harvey created a great opportunity to study the lessons learned and highlighted the need for a holistic, comprehensive, and joint Regional Disaster Shelter and Recovery Plan to provide a roadmap for collaboration between City and County, improve operations, but most importantly outcomes, for those directly impacted by future disasters, especially people experiencing homelessness. Subsequently, there have been additional emergency weather events and natural disasters that have resulted in the need for shelter for vulnerable populations. We expect the effects of climate change will result in future emergency events and the need for a coordinated disaster shelter plan will continue to grow in importance.

The purpose of this RFP is to solicit services from interested and qualified consultants to create a thorough and comprehensive Regional Disaster Shelter Plan. Working in concert with the City of Houston and Harris County, this expert contractor will create a regional disaster relief shelter plan based on national best
practices with defined roles, responsibilities, and strategies. The work would include meetings with local government partners and facilitating community planning meetings to define triggers and assumptions for initial actions. More than just an organizational or leadership chart, the Regional Disaster Shelter Plan will provide blueprints and timelines for all aspects of disaster-related activities, including:

- Evacuation plans; and
- Shelter location requirements, asset deployment and maintenance, internal and external communications, transportation, healthcare, pet care, childcare and education, security, technology needs, social services, etc.; and
- Handling of in-kind personal and corporate donations, food donations, volunteer coordination, etc.; and
- Funding for shelter costs and required processes for procurement and federal reimbursements; and
- Develop and implement strategies designated to maximize federal and state assistance; and
- Inform written mutual aid plans and/or other written agreements to facilitate the sharing of resources, facilities, services, and other potential support required during an emergency or incident, if an agency does not yet have a complete plan; and
- Legal responsibilities and liabilities; and
- Demobilization and transition plan (particularly for closing long-term shelters).

PROPOSED SCOPE OF SERVICES

The Plan must clarify roles and responsibilities for shelter operations and establish contingencies for lead and support departments/agencies. It is not only important for each department within the City and County to know their respective roles, but they must understand the requirements, expectations, and responsibilities of their role(s). The expert contractor will work with the governmental departments and agencies to devise internal plans and define the roles and processes between the local jurisdictions themselves, and between local jurisdictions and:

1. Community organizations and systems such as the homeless response system, the local Mental Health Authority, hospital systems, Network of Behavioral Health Providers, etc.; and
2. City and County Offices of Emergency Management; and
3. Third-party shelter operators like the American Red Cross; and
4. State government entities such as the State Guard and the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS); and
5. Federal government agencies such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and HUD.

This Plan should facilitate regional coordination to reduce duplicity, improve efficiencies, and maximize the collective impact and benefit to the community. The expert contractor will seek to unify the jurisdictions’ plans for the benefit of partner community organizations and those who will ultimately need assistance during a disaster.
Lastly, the expert contractor may host training exercises, facilitate additional coordination meetings as needed, and review disaster plans for small and mid-size disasters (i.e., a chemical leak affecting less than 500 persons, sustained cold and hot weather events, or localized flooding affecting less than 1,000 persons).

**VENDOR QUALIFICATIONS**

The following lists the minimum qualification requirements of the consultant(s):

- At least five (5) years of experience providing similar consulting services; and
- At least three (3) references of clients currently/previously served; at least one of the references to be from a CoC and at least one to be a project completed or underway in the last year; and
- In-depth knowledge of FEMA assistance; and
- Familiarity with HUD's CoC, ESG, CDBG, and other applicable homeless funding streams; and
- Demonstrated experience preparing Disaster Plans for other jurisdictions with populations over 1M; and
- In good standing with the CFTH and their funders; and
- Excellent communication skills; and
- Organizational skills; and
- Vendors must not be debarred, suspended, or otherwise ineligible to do business with the Federal Government.
PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

The following lists the minimum requirements of the consultant(s):

- Cover letter; and
  - Name of the primary contact for purposes of any questions, address, the contact information (phone and email), and total amount requested
- Summary of project approach and methodology (main narrative); and
  - Include a description of the deliverable reports and/or a sample of work
  - Include sample data visualization deliverables
  - Include a list of key personnel assigned to this contract
- Proposed budget tied to deliverables (with detail); and
  - Include the proposed fee schedule
  - Include lump sum price to perform the scope of work
- Evidence of at least two (2) completed contracts of a similar scope of work or evidence of a history of working with homeless service or supportive housing providers; and
- Evidence of experience with federal grants and funding and in particular, HUD CoC, HUD CDBG-DR, and FEMA Public Assistance grants; and
- Evidence of a history of working with Offices of Emergency Management; and
- List at least three (3) professional references.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Each Respondent must submit an electronic copy of its Proposal, including all the requirements in this RFP. Interested vendors should submit their proposals electronically to CFTH at the following email address: contracts@homelesshouston.org.

The new deadline for proposal submission is Friday, August 11, 2023, by 5:00 PM central.

The CFTH anticipates notifying vendors of a decision in September 2023.

In the event the due date for the Proposal is extended or modified, the CFTH will publish the new date on CFTH’s website here: https://www.homelesshouston.org/funding-v2#ActiveFundingOpportunities.

PROPOSED TIMELINE

We anticipate the vendor to be selected in September 2023 and work to begin in October 2023 with an anticipated deadline to submit a draft of the Regional Disaster Recovery Plan by January 2024.
VENDOR SELECTION

CFTH will review responses to this RFP that meet the requirements and are received before the designated closing date. The review committee will select a respondent for recommendation. If the parties cannot negotiate a satisfactory contract within the timeframe, CFTH will formally end negotiations with that Respondent, select the next most favored provider, and attempt to negotiate with that Respondent. CFTH retains the right to reject any or all proposals and to re-solicit if deemed to be in the best interest of CFTH.

The consultant selected will work closely with CFTH leadership. This includes the ability to commit to a timeline that includes several phases throughout the contracted period, i.e., information gathering, data collection, stakeholder consultation and public meetings, pre-draft review, drafting & review, and post-draft follow-up. The target start date and term for the proposed services will be five (5) months, subject to negotiation of a final agreement.

CFTH reserves the right to amend, suspend, terminate, or reissue this RFP, in whole or in part, at any stage. In no event is CFTH liable to respondents for any cost or damages incurred in connection with the RFP process, including but not limited to, all costs of preparing a response to this RFP, or any other costs incurred in reliance on this RFP. No respondent shall be entitled to repayment from CFTH for any costs, expenses, or fees related to this RFP. All supporting documentation submitted in response to this RFP will become the property of the CFTH. Respondents may also withdraw their interest in the RFP, in writing, at any point in time, as more information becomes known.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

For transparency and to prevent any real or perceived unfair advantage, all questions or requests for additional information submitted to the CFTH regarding this RFP and the corresponding answers will be published on CFTH’s website or otherwise made available to all Respondents.

Notice: No verbal questions will be answered. All questions and inquiries must be in writing and submitted via email to contracts@homelesshouston.org by Friday, August 4, 2023, at 5 pm Central.