



**IOWA FINANCE
AUTHORITY**

2021 Iowa Council on Homelessness Strategic Planning

Request for Information RFI-HC1-2021

Iowa Finance Authority (IFA)

Information must be received no later than

January 29, 2021

4:30 p.m. Central Time

For information about this notice, interested persons shall contact only:

Amber Lewis, Homelessness Programs Manager

Iowa Finance Authority

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Des Moines, IA 50315

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1 Purpose

The objective of this Request for Information (RFI) is to solicit responses from a professionally-qualified consultant to work with the Iowa Council on Homelessness (Council) and the Iowa Finance Authority (IFA) on strategic planning. The consultant would be responsible for facilitating development and implementation of a community plan. This follows a strategic planning process concluded in early 2020 that separated out the Council from its earlier role as the governance body for the Iowa Balance of State Continuum of Care (CoC) for homeless services.

2 Background Information and Goals

2.1 Background Information

2.1.1 The Iowa Council on Homelessness and IFA. The Iowa Council on Homelessness (Council) was organized officially according to 2008 Iowa Acts, SF 2161, which also directed IFA to provide administrative support. Iowa Administrative Code, Section 265, Chapter 31, further specifies the role of IFA in providing administrative support to the Council, as follows: “Staff assistance and administrative support shall be provided by the Iowa Finance Authority as approved by the executive director.”

The same chapter specifies the duties and responsibilities of the Council:

“The duties of the council shall include but are not limited to the following:

- a. Develop a process for evaluating state policies, programs, statutes, and rules to determine whether any state policies, programs, statutes, or rules should be revised to help prevent and alleviate homelessness.
- b. Evaluate whether state agency resources could be more efficiently coordinated with other state agencies to prevent and alleviate homelessness.
- c. Work to develop a coordinated and seamless service delivery system to prevent and alleviate homelessness.
- d. Use existing resources to identify and prioritize efforts to prevent persons from becoming homeless and to eliminate factors that keep people homeless.
- e. Identify and use federal and other funding opportunities to address and reduce homelessness within the state.
- f. Work to identify causes and effects of homelessness and increase awareness among policymakers and the general public.
- g. Advise the governor’s office, the Iowa finance authority, state agencies, and private organizations on strategies to prevent and eliminate homelessness.

The council shall make annual recommendations to the governor regarding matters which impact homelessness on or before September 15.

The council shall prepare and file with the governor and the general assembly on or before the first day of December in each odd-numbered year, a report on homelessness in Iowa.

The council shall assist in the completion of the state’s continuum of care application to the United States department of housing and urban development.”

2.1.2 The Iowa Balance of State Continuum of Care (CoC). Prior to 2020, the Council served as the decision-making board for the CoC, responsible for carrying out all the duties specified in the federal Continuum of Care Program at 24 CFR part 578 and administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). That program required significant and sustained focus by the Council all year long to accomplish the requirements of that program and compete for approximately \$7 million annually in federal funding to support homeless assistance programs across 96 of Iowa’s 99 counties.

Beginning in 2017, IFA together with the Council engaged in a process to develop a new governance structure for the CoC, separate from the Council. The goal was to build capacity to manage the increasing federal expectations of CoCs, especially in the areas of Administration, Leadership, and CoC Representation. Consultants from Homebase, The Center for Common Concerns (<https://www.homebaseccc.org/>), were retained to assist in developing a new separate CoC Board. This process concluded in January 2020 with the development of a new CoC Interim Board with plans for a permanent board, along with a vote by the Council to officially separate the Council from the new CoC entity.

2.1.3 Because the Council no longer has responsibility all year long for the significant and complex demands of the CoC, it has the ability now to redirect its focus to the other duties specified for the Council in Iowa Code. IFA and the Council seek a new strategic plan to guide the Council’s work that may include but is not limited to:

- Benchmarking the Council with other comparable statewide organizations;
- Conducting focus groups, interviews, surveys and/or any other method that will be useful in receiving stakeholder input;
- Review of the legislation which created and governs the Council;
- Facilitation of group meetings with the board and staff to create consensus on a new strategic plan.

2.2 Goals for Governance Planning

- A governing body structure to support and strengthen the homeless response system in Iowa and the coalition of providers.
- A governance structure that sets clear goals and ensures that goals are accomplished.
- Performance across the system is used to create ongoing funding priorities as applicable.
- A clear purpose, with recognition in both the public and private sectors of the Council’s leadership role in Iowa’s homeless response system.
- A clear process to ensure Conflicts of Interest are limited and/or removed and does not create a barrier to accomplishing system goals/responsibilities/roles.
- A governance structure that ensures respect for diversity and inclusion of people with lived experience with homelessness in decision making processes.
- A clear communication plan to ensure that all stakeholders are informed about the work in the community.

3 Information Sought and Anticipated Scope of Work

IFA is seeking information from vendors who are interested in strategic planning for the Council. The anticipated Scope of Work includes, but is not limited to, the following:

Consultant Task	Deliverable
Design and execution of a strategic visioning and comprehensive planning process.	Provision of timely email communication, including, but not limited to; meeting schedules, meeting agendas, meeting notes, and

	informational updates.
Strategic Planning Team (SPT) meeting notices, agendas, and meeting minutes.	Production of any applicable meeting notices, agendas, and minutes per Iowa Open Meeting and Records rules.
SPT member task follow-up to ensure progression of all planned work.	Regular communication with Team members assigned specific tasks to support timely work and responses on those tasks.
Review current committee and workgroup structure and create recommendations and justification for any changes.	A proposed plan reflecting any recommended changes as determined by stakeholder input described elsewhere.
Facilitate the planning of a specific timeline for implementation of the new strategic plan.	A timeline document outlining the new plan.
Facilitate planning for the strategies and tasks that will best accomplish the mission and duties of the Council.	Recommended Strategic Plan that will guide the Council in best accomplishing its duties.

The Council seeks recommendations regarding the best process to develop an actionable strategic plan.

Stage 1 - Discovery - Vision and key goals with Council’s Executive Committee and Stakeholders

This stage includes consensus building among the Council, its Executive Committee, members, and other stakeholders. Discover a shared strategic vision that is:

- Clearly stated;
- Compelling;
- Timely;
- Describes a clear and present need;
- Motivates people to act; and
- A worthwhile challenge.

Stage 2 - Research and Validation

This stage should produce the substantive documentation and solutions needed for validation of discovered vision and key goals and inform the strategic planning process.

Stage 3 - Identify strategic goals and write a comprehensive and actionable strategic plan

After discovery and research, this stage entails the identification of key strategic goals and the development of an actionable strategic plan that will serve as the overall blueprint for our work. This plan should include:

- An executive summary;
- Shared vision;
- Goals;
- Objectives;
- Strategies;

- Tactics;
- Responsible partners and their roles;
- Measures; and
- Outcomes.

Stage 4- Development of implementation recommendations

This stage includes the development of recommendations regarding the implementation phase of the Council's work. Included with this phase is a detailed timeline to implement the plan and methods of measuring successful implementation.

The anticipated timeline of the Scope of Work is approximately six months, with a detailed plan developed before the end of 2021.

Vendors are asked to submit a recommendation that will provide IFA with a cost-effective and results-oriented approach that will facilitate the development and implementation of a comprehensive strategic plan.

Information proposals should specifically include vendor capabilities, details of a preliminary work plan, implementation strategies, and associated costs.

On-site, in-person availability is preferred for at least some portion of the work, such as facilitating meetings of the Strategic Planning Team. Vendors are asked to include in their responses some consideration for the costs and logistics of in-person availability.

This RFI will provide background information for vendor selection. The intended purpose of this RFI is to allow all interested vendors to present a conceptual framework for completion of key tasks.

4 Request for Information and Procedure

This request requires any vendor wishing to submit information to respond to this Request for Information (RFI) by 4:30 p.m. on January 29, 2021.

5 Timeline

- Issue RFI: on or about January 5, 2021
- Questions due: January 18, 2021, 4:30 p.m. CST
- Responses to questions posted on or about: January 20, 2021
- RFI responses due: January 29, 2021, 4:30 p.m. CST
- In-person or phone presentations, if deemed necessary: Weeks of either February 1 or February 8, 2021
- Announcement of successful vendor: On or about February 12, 2021

6 Submission of Response

Vendors shall email written responses by 4:30 p.m. January 29, 2021 to amber.lewis@iowafinance.com.

7 Presentations

IFA may hold in-person or phone meetings the weeks of February 1 or February 8, 2021, as deemed

necessary.

8 Questions and Requests for Clarification

Vendors interested in responding to this RFI may submit questions or requests for clarification. All questions or requests must be submitted by email to: amber.lewis@iowafinance.com and be received no later than 4:30 p.m. January 18, 2021.

Vendors may contact only the Issuing Officer with questions related to the interpretation of RFI and the procurement process. If a vendor or someone acting on a vendor's behalf attempts to discuss this RFI with any IFA employee, other than Amber Lewis, the vendor may be disqualified.

IFA may contact vendors for clarification of RFI content as needed throughout the RFI process.

For information about this notice, interested persons shall contact:

Amber Lewis, Homelessness Programs Manager
Iowa Finance Authority
1963 Bell Avenue, Suite 200
Des Moines, IA 50315
Phone: 515-425-0452
E-mail: amber.lewis@iowafinance.com

9 Review of RFI Responses

9.1 IFA reserves the right to reject any and all responses, in whole and in part, received in response to this RFI at any time. Issuance of the RFI in no way constitutes a commitment to award any contract. This RFI is designed to provide vendors with the information necessary for the preparation of informative responses and possible presentations of recommended work plans.

This RFI process is for IFA's benefit and is intended to provide information to assist in the development of future requests for goods and services. The RFI is not intended to be comprehensive and each vendor is responsible for determining all factors necessary for submission of a comprehensive response and a complete capability presentation. The RFI response and demonstration will be a review of a suggested work plan, strategies, and estimated costs.

9.2 An RFI response may be rejected outright and not reviewed for any one (1) of the following reasons, therefore vendors are asked to make every effort to meet the RFI timelines and to include the requested information:

- Failure of vendor to deliver the response by the due date and time.
- Failure to include information requested in the RFI.

10 Evaluation of RFI

In evaluating the responses, IFA must be able to identify:

- Proposed work plan, suggested strategies, and timeline
- Anticipated total cost and suggested cost allocation for each proposed strategy
- Overview of vendor capabilities and assigned team members' experience, including case studies for comparable projects

11 Public Records and Requests for Confidentiality

11.1 The release of information by IFA to the public is subject to Iowa Code Chapter 22 and other applicable provisions of law relating to the release of records in the possession of a State agency. Vendors are encouraged to familiarize themselves with these provisions prior to submitting a bid proposal. All information submitted by a vendor may be treated as public information by IFA unless the vendor properly requests that information be treated as confidential at the time of submitting the proposal.

11.2 Any requests for confidential treatment of information must be included in a cover letter with the Vendor's bid proposal and must enumerate the specific grounds in Iowa Code Chapter 22 or other legal reasons which support treatment of the material as confidential and must indicate why disclosure is not in the best interests of the public. The request must also include the name, address and telephone number of the person authorized by the vendor to respond to any inquiries by IFA concerning the confidential status of the materials.

11.3 Any documents submitted which contain confidential information must be marked on the outside as containing confidential information, and each page upon which confidential information appears must be marked as containing confidential information. The confidential information must be clearly identifiable to the reader wherever it appears. All copies of the proposal submitted, as well as the original proposal, must be marked in this manner.

11.4 Confidential Information - In addition to marking the material as confidential material where it appears, the Vendor must submit one copy of the bid proposal from which the confidential information has been excised. The confidential material must be excised in such a way as to allow the public to determine the general nature of the material removed and to retain as much of the document as possible. These pages must be submitted with the cover letter and will be made available for public inspection.

11.5 Vendor's failure to request in the bid proposal confidential treatment of material pursuant to this Section and the relevant laws and administrative rules will be deemed by IFA as a waiver of any right to confidentiality which the vendor may have had.

12 Copyrights

By submitting a response, the vendor agrees that IFA may copy the response for purposes of facilitating the evaluation or to respond to requests for public records. The Vendor represents that such copying will not violate any copyrights in the materials submitted.

13 Restrictions on Gifts and Activities

Iowa Code chapter 68B contains laws which restrict gifts which may be given or received by state employees and requires certain individuals to disclose information concerning their activities with state government. Vendors are responsible for determining the applicability of this chapter to their activities and for complying with these requirements. In addition, Iowa Code section 722.1 provides that it is a felony offense to bribe a public official.

14 Content of the Request for Information (RFI)

This RFI is designed to provide vendors with the information necessary for the preparation of an appropriate response. It is not intended to be comprehensive, and each vendor is responsible for determining all factors necessary for submission of a comprehensive response.

- IFA reserves the right to modify this RFI at any time.
- Responses should be based on the material contained in this RFI or any other relevant information the vendor thinks is appropriate.
- By submitting a response, each vendor agrees that it will not bring any claim or have any cause of action against IFA, or any employee of IFA based on any misunderstanding concerning the information provided or concerning failure, negligent or otherwise to provide the vendor with pertinent information as intended by this RFI.

15 Costs to Vendors

IFA is not responsible for any costs incurred by a vendor, which are related to the preparation or delivery of the response, any on-site inspection that may be required, or any other activities related to this RFI.

16 RFI Responses

All printed information used to demonstrate a vendor's product becomes the property of the State of Iowa. The State will have the right to use ideas or adaptations of ideas that are presented in the responses. It is the responsibility of the bidder to ensure that the response is received by the IFA by the closing submission date. A response may be judged nonresponsive and excluded if it is not received by the deadline or does not follow the specified format.

17 Sources of Information Used in Addition to Responses

IFA reserves the right to contact vendors after the submission of responses for the purpose of clarification and to ensure mutual understanding.

18 No Obligation to Issue Contract

The issuance of this RFI does not obligate IFA in any way to issue a contract for the goods and services described in this RFI. IFA reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to reject any and all responses received in response to this RFI. A contract for the accepted response will be based upon the factors described in this RFI.

19 Vendor Responses Identifying Information

- State the name and principal place of business of the vendor.
- Identify the vendor's type of business entity such as a corporation or partnership.
- State the vendor's place of incorporation, if applicable. At the respondent's discretion, provide an organization chart for the vendor. Include any parent, subsidiary and affiliate companies that may be relevant to this information request.
- State the name, address, email address and telephone number of the vendor representative to contact regarding all matters concerning this RFI.

20 Vendor References

Please provide references for organizations in which you have implemented your services, including applicable customer contact information.