



# Urban Redevelopment Authority

## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)**

**Capacity Building and Program Design for Public Lot Maintenance**

**RFP Issue Date: November 30, 2015**

**Due Date: December 23, 2015 at Noon ET**

# Capacity Building and Program Design for Public Lot Maintenance

## **Section 1. General Information**

- 1.1** The Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh (URA) requests proposals from not-for-profit entities and/or teams to work with URA and City officials to form new guidelines for the way the City and URA maintain vacant lots and to develop a capacity building program that will enable community based service providers to perform lot maintenance under URA and City contracts. This is NOT a request for maintenance services on lots, which will be the subject of a subsequent RFP.
  
- 1.2** The contract for services is estimated to be 24 months.
  
- 1.3** Contact person for all queries and for receipt of proposals:  
  
Emily Mitchell  
Sr. Project Development Specialist  
Urban Redevelopment Authority  
200 Ross Street, 12<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219  
  
412 255-6695  
[emitchell@ura.org](mailto:emitchell@ura.org)
  
- 1.4** Respondents shall restrict all contact and questions regarding this RFP and selection process to the individual named herein. Questions shall be directed in writing to Emily Mitchell (See section 1.3) by December 16, 2015. Questions will be answered in writing by December 18, 2015. Questions submitted after December 16 may not be answered.
  
- 1.5** Consideration is expected to be given, but is not guaranteed to be given, to the criteria listed in this RFP. The URA reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, to waive any and all informalities outlined in the RFP and in the selection process, and generally to make the award that, in its judgment, will best meet the objectives outlined in this RFP.
  
- 1.6** Expenses incurred by the respondents in replying to the RFP or in making any appearance are at the respondents' own expense and risk.

- 1.7 Subconsultants may participate on multiple applicant teams. The URA reserves the right to make suggestions related to team structure during final contract negotiations.

## **Section 2. Background Information**

Currently, the URA oversees the maintenance of over 1,400 vacant lots and structures in its ownership. The City of Pittsburgh is charged with overseeing over 14,000 such parcels. As the Pittsburgh Land Bank establishes itself this inventory of public lots will continue to grow. In order to effectively manage this portfolio a lot by lot analysis will determine the future use of each lot. An analysis of proximity, size, condition, community planning, and other factors will determine the strategy for each lot – such as a holding strategy for future development or a “push to green” strategy for long term green space. New maintenance guidelines for this inventory needs to be established to reflect this strategy, as well as best practices for green space maintenance, ecology, and reclamation. The URA is seeking a partner with this expertise as it makes this change in policy and practice for the maintenance and management of its publicly owned green space.

These parcels, mostly vacant lots and a relatively smaller number of structures, are irregularly distributed across the City of Pittsburgh. The concentrations of vacant lots happen to be in some of our most distressed communities and often contribute to the image of blight and abandonment in these neighborhoods, a situation that the URA and City are committed to resolve. In tackling the lot maintenance challenge, the URA in partnership with the office of Mayor Peduto are committed to harnessing the energy and ingenuity of individuals, organizations and small business owners already in these communities to maintain and improve vacant properties at the community level.

The URA routinely issues a RFP for lot maintenance services, which is done approximately every three years, with the ability to extend the period to five years. An RFP for lot maintenance was last issued in the winter of 2011. It is our intention that an RFP for lot maintenance will be offered subsequent to this RFP. After this process, the RFP for lot maintenance will meet the requirements for high quality and cost effective maintenance, establish new guidelines for URA lot maintenance, and enable community based service providers to competitively bid for services.

## **Section 3. Description of Services**

### ***3.1 Description***

The URA is seeking a not-for-profit partner organization and/or team to help us design and implement a community driven lot maintenance program. This program will ensure that the URA meets ongoing obligations for lot maintenance in a cost effective manner and in consideration of

contemporary standards regarding safeguarding the overall quality of life and ecology of our neighborhoods. At the same time, this partner will provide a context to springboard community based organizations, small businesses and entrepreneurs into a higher level of performance and professionalism that could make them qualified to take on more work and more consistently be competitive with contracting.

This is not a request for maintenance services on lots.

**3.2 Expected outcomes for the work include:**

- Identification of best practices for a community lot maintenance program;
- Development of new guidelines for public lot maintenance;
- Design of a Pittsburgh lot maintenance program that meets the requirements of high quality and cost effective maintenance, while enabling community based service providers to competitively bid on URA and City contracts;
- Support of the URA in the development of a lot maintenance RFP that will meet these goals;
- Capacity building and ongoing support for community based organizations, businesses and entrepreneurs seeking these maintenance contracts;
- Intermediary support between government officials contracting for lot maintenance services and the community based service providers that seek these contracts; and
- Budget development and funding strategy for city-wide lot maintenance.

**Section 4. Organization and Required Submittals for Proposal**

**4.1 Submission Requirements**

An electronic copy of the proposal must be **received by the URA before the due date listed on the first page of the RFP**. Proposals received after the deadline will not be accepted.

Submission should be emailed to the contact set forth in section 1.3:

**4.2 Proposal Format and Content**

Submissions should include the following:

- **Cover Letter containing at a minimum:**
  - Company name and contact information;
  - Understanding of services and ability to proceed promptly; and
  - Why this entity and/or team is the most qualified to complete this project.

- **Organization Information:**

Briefly describe your organization and partner organizations (if any), included on the team. Please include the following information:

- Name, address, and telephone number;

- Number and location of office(s);
  - Managing principal, CEO, or president;
  - M/WBE Status;
  - Type of organization (sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation, etc.);
  - Legal actions currently pending against firm;
  - Roles of the team members; and
  - Resumes for key staff members assigned to the project.
- **Qualifications**  
Briefly describe organization/team qualifications. Please include the following information:
    - Resumes for key staff members assigned to the project;
    - Examples of relevant projects; and
    - References for similar work.
  - **Implementation Plan:**  
Briefly describe an implementation plan to deliver the expected outcomes for the work described in section 3.2. Please include the following information:
    - A detailed narrative of work plan and methods; and
    - Project timeline with key milestones.
  - **Fee Proposal**  
The fee proposal shall identify cost breakdown for the implementation plan. The fee proposal should include expected hours, hourly rates for project staff, expenses, and an overall budget for services. The fee proposal should be based upon a contract duration of 24 months.

## **Section 5. Evaluation Criteria**

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

### **5.1 Technical Expertise and Experience**

- Overall experience of the organization with projects of similar goals; and
- Expertise and professional level of the individuals proposed to conduct the work.

### **5.2 Plan Implementation**

- Clarity and completeness of the proposal and the apparent general understanding of the work;
- Proposed implementation plan and methods to carry out that work; and
- Schedule for the completion of work including the sequence and relationships between major tasks.

### **5.3 Fee Proposal**

- Overall budget for the project and efficient utilization of hours; and
- Hourly rates for proposed services.

### **5.4 Equal Employment Opportunity**

The URA has adopted an overall project goal of 18 percent minority participation and 7 percent women's participation in its contract work. To that end, majority consultants are encouraged to team with, subcontract, and/or joint venture with certified minority and women owned firms. Please indicate the proposed level of MBE/WBE participation.

## **Section 6. Process**

**6.1** Responses to the RFP will be evaluated by a selection committee. Finalists of the RFP process may be asked to meet with the selection committee in a formal interview process. Final consultant selection will be made by the URA board, which will be informed by the recommendation of the selection committee. The URA reserves the right to reject any and all proposals.

**6.2** Upon notification of selection by URA staff, the successful respondent is required to execute an agreement with the URA within three (3) weeks of notification. If the successful respondent is unwilling or unable to execute the agreement as required by the RFP, the URA has the right to request another respondent to enter into the contract with the URA.