



# Request for Proposals

## Grant Services

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Issued: September 21, 2020

**QUESTIONS AND INTENT TO RESPOND DUE DATE:**

**October 5, 2020, 4:00 p.m. (CST)**

**PROPOSAL DUE DATE:**

**October 23, 2020, 4:00 p.m. (CST)**

**PROPOSALS RECEIVED AFTER DEADLINE WILL BE RETURNED UNOPENED**

The City of Lake Forest  
Finance Director  
800 N. Field Drive  
Lake Forest, IL 60045  
(847) 810-3612

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**1. Purpose of Request for Proposal**

The City of Lake Forest is seeking proposals to provide both grant writing and grant administration services. Respondents to this Request for Proposals (RFP) are not required to respond to both aspects of the scope of services, and the City may award components to multiple respondents to provide the most advantageous overall strategy for the City. The term of the agreement shall be one year, with the option to renew the agreement for four (4) additional one-year periods, subject to acceptable performance and at the sole discretion of the City.

**2. Intent**

It is the intent of the City to enter into an agreement with a qualified firm(s) to provide professional grant writing and/or grant administration services for the period identified.

**3. Scope of Work**

The City of Lake Forest is a home-rule municipality (population 19,275) located in Lake County, Illinois. The City's fiscal year ends on April 30. The City provides high quality services to its residents and businesses, including: public safety (police and fire), public works (engineering, streets, sanitation, water treatment and distribution, storm and sanitary sewer, fleet), parks and recreation (parks/forestry, recreation, young adult and senior services, cemetery, golf course, beach), community and economic development, and administrative services (human resources, finance, innovation and technology). Additional information about the City may be found on the web site [www.cityoflakeforest.com](http://www.cityoflakeforest.com).

The City currently administers grants on a decentralized basis, with each operating department responsible for identifying grant opportunities, preparing grant submittals and administering grant awards. The City's Finance Department provides general guidance and administers the City's Grant Policies and Procedures, coordinating the assembly of information required as part of the City's annual independent audit.

For the current fiscal year, the Finance Department's goal is to develop a more streamlined and centralized grants administration system, while still allowing the operating departments the ability to manage their grant

projects on a day to day basis. This RFP process is intended to fulfill two distinct functions related to grants at the City:

### **Grant Solicitation/Writing**

The City seeks to expand its grant portfolio and increase its solicitation of grant funding opportunities. It is anticipated that the grant writer will provide ongoing grant writing services and proposal/application support to the City departments on a contractual basis. Proposals will be considered from both firms and individuals. The City seeks a grant writer with a proven track record in writing successful and complex proposals from a variety of funding sources, both private and governmental. Respondents should have an ability to work with City staff in all operating departments, with various skill levels related to grant submittals, to prepare high quality grant applications. Previous experience working in the Chicago metropolitan area is preferred. Specific experience with state and local governmental units seeking grants in a wide variety of areas (ie. Public safety, water utility, storm water, environmental sustainability) is highly desirable. The Grant Writer will work closely with the City's Finance Department, who is charged with the implementation of a more robust grant solicitation process.

The contractor's responsibilities will include:

- Understand and actively engage with City departments to understand their operations in order to identify potential grant funding opportunities.
- Conduct ongoing grant prospect research. Grant writer will receive support from management, as well as access to potential sources of grant opportunities and commonly used grant portals.
- Provide consistent and clear communication with City staff about grant prospects, proposal and reporting requirements, and deadlines.
- Develop and maintain grant templates and materials.

### **Grants Administration**

The City seeks proposals for a comprehensive grants administration system. Respondents for this scope of services may be in the form of a grant administration software application managed by the City or contractual services through a firm that provides full grant administration capabilities.

Grant administration requirements include:

- Comprehensive management of grant submittals, awards, reporting requirements, financial tracking and annual grant renewals.
- Professional and confidential management of grant records, organizational documents, and data.
- Variety of report formats to meet differing user needs.

#### 4. Anticipated Schedule

The following schedule is anticipated, which is subject to change:

September 21, 2020	Release of RFP
October 5, 2020	RFP Questions and Intent to Respond Due (4:00 p.m.)
October 8, 2020	Release responses to questions received
October 23, 2020	RFP Proposals Due
October 23-November 20	Staff Review and Potential Interviews/Follow Up
December 7, 2020	City Manager/City Council Approval (as needed)
January 1, 2021	Effective date of service agreement(s)

#### 5. Intent to Respond

All firms who intend to respond to this RFP are requested to submit an e-mail with contact information by the date indicated in Section 4 to:

**Elizabeth Holleb, Finance Director**  
**The City of Lake Forest**  
**800 North Field Drive**  
**Lake Forest, IL 60045**  
**E-Mail address: [hollebe@cityoflakeforest.com](mailto:hollebe@cityoflakeforest.com)**

Failure to submit the intent to respond by this date will not preclude any potential offeror from responding to the RFP, but it provides contact information in the event communication to potential respondents is deemed necessary. In the event of a material modification to the RFP, all known and/or potential respondents will be notified of an amendment to the RFP as determined by the receipt of an Intent to Respond.

#### 6. Proposal Submission Requirements

Respondents must submit one (1) original physical and one (1) electronic copy of their proposal. Proposals shall be submitted in a sealed envelope labeled "Sealed Proposal for Grant Services" by the date and time specified.

**All proposals received after the time specified for proposals due shall be returned unopened.** The electronic copy must be in .PDF format and enclosed in the sealed envelope on a flash drive. Proposals shall be delivered to Finance Director Elizabeth Holleb (contact information provided in Section 5). Respondents accept all risks of late delivery of mailed proposals regardless of fault. Facsimile and other electronically transmitted proposals will not be considered. All proposals and accompanying documentation shall become the property of the City and will not be returned (with the exception of late proposals returned unopened).

All inquiries or questions regarding this RFP are to be e-mailed only, along with the intent to respond by the date specified to Finance Director Elizabeth Holleb (contact information provided in Section 5). Responses to all questions will be provided October 8, 2020. Any oral communications will be considered unofficial and non-binding. Potential respondents should rely only on written statements issued by the City. The City will be unable to respond to inquiries received after October 5, 2020.

Proposals should be prepared simply and economically, providing a straight forward, concise description of the proposer's capabilities to satisfy the requirements of the RFP. Special bindings, colored displays, promotional materials, etc. are not desired. Emphasis should be placed on the completeness and clarity of content. All proposal responses must be in the following format:

1. *Cover Letter*  
The cover letter should contain the name of the firm or individual, address, and the contact information for individual(s) authorized to answer technical, price, and contract questions. Contact information should include telephone number, fax number, mailing address, and email address. The cover letter must be signed by a person or persons authorized to bind the proposer(s). The cover letter must indicate whether any exceptions to specifications have been taken and reference the location in the proposal where these exceptions are detailed. The cover letter should also indicate that the proposal is a firm and irrevocable offer for one hundred twenty (120) days from the submission deadline.
2. *Table of Contents*  
The contents of the proposal shall be included in an index at the beginning of the proposal and should include all contents and attachments.
3. *Firm and Staff Background*  
As previously stated, the City will accept proposals from qualified individuals who may modify this proposal section as appropriate.

This section should include the size of the firm, the location of the office from which the proposed work would be performed, the number and nature of professional staff to be assigned on the engagement (both full-time and part-time).

The firm should describe and provide a status of any disciplinary action taken or pending against the firm during the past five (5) years with state regulatory bodies and/or professional organizations. The proposal should identify and describe any pending or previous litigation the firm was involved in over the past five (5) years.

Provide information pertaining to the grant services experience of each person to be assigned and association with any professional organizations relevant to this RFP.

Describe the firms' approach to education, training and professional development as it relates to both state and federal grant requirements. Describe any education, training and consultation available to clients on state and federal grant requirements, including any costs.

4. *Proposed Scope of Service*

Clearly and succinctly describe the scope of services to be provided pursuant to Section 3 of the RFP. **Any exceptions to the specifications outlined in the scope of work shall be listed and fully explained, and must be clearly marked "Exceptions to Specifications."**

Respondents are to assume that unless specifically stated, services are to be provided consistent with best practices and adhere to applicable state and federal grant requirements as they exist today and may change in the future.

Should third party vendors be necessary to provide any of the requested services, the detailed involvement of those parties and delineation of responsibilities should be explained in the appropriate sections.

5. *Proposed Schedule of Implementation*

Describe the typical engagement process and implementation schedule, noting any specific requirements of the City.

6. *References*

Provide a list of client references of similar engagements. Provide no fewer than five (5) references. Provide a contact person, telephone number, and email address for each customer reference.

7. *Cost Proposal*

Respondents must submit a complete cost proposal for the initial one-year term, as well as the four (4) optional renewal years. All costs associated with the engagement must be identified. If an hourly rate is proposed, respondents are required to estimate hours required for the engagement.

8. *Attachments*

In addition to all information requested above, the following attachments are required:

- Complete required signatures for the City of Lake Forest identity theft and General Certification Requirements (submit a completed RFP Section 11 and 12).

## 7. Evaluation Criteria and Selection Process

The City may select a group of finalists for in-house or teleconference interviews, but such interviews are at the discretion of the City. If a software application is proposed for grant administration, the City will require a demonstration for any selected finalists.

Proposals will be evaluated in a fair, consistent, and objective manner. Selection will be based on response to questions or requirements identified in this RFP and interviews, if applicable. The final recommendation will be subject to consideration and approval by the City Manager, as well as the City Council if the annual amount exceeds \$25,000.

Proposals will be evaluated utilizing the sets of criteria identified below (not listed in priority order):

### **Mandatory Elements**

- The firm is licensed to practice in the State of Illinois
- Proposed fees for services
- Demonstrates quality work as evidenced by the proposal submitted
- Compliance with RFP specifications
- The firm may not seek to unreasonably limit its liability for negligence or breach of fiduciary duty

### **Technical Qualifications**

- Expertise and experience of firm and assigned personnel
- Past experience and performance on comparable engagements (via reference checks)
- Professional staff to be assigned to the engagement
- Availability throughout the year for technical consultation
- Quality of work product samples (these will be required for finalists during the proposal review period and are not needed for initial submittal)

## 8. Award of Agreement

The firm(s) selected as a result of this RFP process will be required to enter into a written professional services agreement. Such agreement shall reflect the terms and conditions included in the RFP and the selected firm's proposal, as well as any other provisions mutually agreed to by both parties. The agreement is subject to approval by the City Manager and potentially the City Council. In the event that the proposer to whom the services are awarded does not execute a contract within thirty (30) calendar days after approval, the City may give notice to such proposer of intent to award the contract to the next most qualified proposer or to call for new proposals and may proceed to act accordingly.

## 9. Reservation of Rights

The City reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to use without limitation any and all information, concepts, and data submitted in response to this RFP, or derived by further investigation thereof. The City further reserves the right at any time and for any reason to cancel this solicitation, to reject any or all Proposals, to supplement, add to, delete from, or otherwise change this RFP if conditions dictate. The City may seek clarifications from a respondent at any time and failure to respond promptly may be cause for rejection. The City also reserves the right to interview only those firms it determines shall provide the most advantageous services and to negotiate with one or more firms to develop acceptable contract terms.

## 10. Terms and Conditions

- 10.1. This RFP is issued pursuant to applicable provisions of the City's Purchasing Policies and Procedures. Responses to this RFP shall be opened in private.
- 10.2. The City will not be liable in any way for any costs incurred by respondents in replying to this RFP.
- 10.3. Proposals may be withdrawn prior to the deadline designated for submission of proposals by written request only, and another proposal may then be submitted if done in accordance with the RFP instructions. No offer shall be withdrawn within one hundred twenty (120) calendar days after the submission deadline.
- 10.4. An agreement resulting from the acceptance of a proposal shall be on forms prescribed by the City and approved by legal counsel and shall contain, as a minimum, the applicable provisions of this RFP and the proposal itself. The City reserves the right to reject any agreement which does not conform to the RFP, the proposal submitted, or the City's requirements for agreements and contracts.
- 10.5. The contracted firm shall not assign any interest in the contract and shall not transfer any interest without the prior written consent of the City.
- 10.6. Respondents shall thoroughly examine and be familiar with the RFP specifications. The failure or omission of any respondent to receive or examine this document shall in no way relieve any respondent of obligations with respect to this RFP or the subsequent agreement.
- 10.7. The firm shall provide an affirmative statement indicating that the firm and all assigned key professional staff are properly licensed to practice in the State of Illinois.
- 10.8. The firm shall maintain books, records, documents and other evidence directly pertinent to the work under the engagement. Access shall be provided to the books, records, documents and other evidence for

purposes of inspection, auditing and/or copying as may be needed. Such documentation shall be maintained and made available during performance of the work under the agreement and until a minimum of three (3) years from the date of the final report, with the understanding that any particular grant may require retention of a longer period. Records related to any dispute, litigation or settlement of claims arising out of such performance shall be maintained and made available a minimum of three (3) years after the date of resolution of such dispute, litigation or settlement.

- 10.9. If, through any cause, a firm contracted pursuant to this RFP fails to fulfill the obligations agreed to in a timely and proper manner, the City shall have the right to terminate the contract by notifying the firm in writing and specifying a termination date not less than thirty (30) calendar days in advance. In such event, the contracted firm shall be entitled to just and equitable compensation for any satisfactory work completed.
- 10.10. After the execution of the agreement, any alterations to existing fees or additional fees imposed must be approved by the City in the form of an addendum to the agreement. All addenda are subject to the review of legal counsel.

10.11. Confidentiality

Proposals and other documents submitted shall be examined to determine the validity of any written requests for nondisclosure of proprietary or confidential information. After award of a contract, all responses, documents, and materials submitted by the respondent pertaining to this RFP will be considered public information unless otherwise determined by legal counsel. All data, documents and other information developed as a result of this contractual agreement shall become the property of the City. Based on the public nature of RFP's, a respondent must inform the City, in writing, of the exact materials in the submittal which it believes are proprietary or confidential, and should not be made part of the public record in accordance with the Illinois Freedom of Information Act. The respondent will be financially responsible for all expenses of the City, its public officials, consultants, employees, agents and representatives in defending the denial of access to such material pursuant to a Freedom of Information Act request.

(continued)

**11. Lake Forest Identity Theft Protection**

All City of Lake Forest vendors with access to sensitive material must acknowledge receipt of a copy of The City of Lake Forest’s identity theft prevention program policy, a copy of which can be found by clicking the following:

[Administrative Directive 3-4, Identify Theft Policy](#)

All proposals submitted in response to this RFP must include a fully executed certification:

IDENTITY THEFT PREVENTION PROGRAM CERTIFICATION

I certify that I have read, understood and agree to comply with The City of Lake Forest’s Identity Theft Prevention Program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Institution

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**12. General Certification Requirements**

STATE OF ILLINOIS )  
 ) SS  
COUNTY OF \_\_\_\_\_ )

**PROPOSER'S CERTIFICATION**

The undersigned, being first duly sworn on oath, deposes and states that all statements made herein are made on behalf of Proposer, that this deponent is authorized to make them, and that the statements contained herein are true and correct.

Proposer deposes, states, and certifies that Proposer is not barred from contracting with a unit of state or local government as a result of (i) a delinquency in the payment of any tax administered by the Illinois Department of Revenue unless Contractor is contesting, in accordance with the procedures established by the appropriate revenue Act, its liability for the tax or the amount of the tax, as set forth in 65 ILCS 5/11-42.1-1; (ii) a violation of either Section 33E-3 or Section 33E-4 of Article 33 of the Criminal Code of 1961, 720 ILCS 5/33E-1 *et seq.*; or (iii) a violation of the USA Patriot Act of 2001, 107 Public Law 56 (October 26, 2001) (the "Patriot Act") or other statutes, orders, rules, and regulations of the United States government and its various executive departments, agencies and offices related to the subject matter of the Patriot Act, including, but not limited to, Executive Order 13224 effective September 24, 2001.

DATED This \_\_\_\_\_ Day Of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_.

Attest/Witness:

Proposer's Name:

By: \_\_\_\_\_ By: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Subscribed and Sworn to  
before me this \_\_\_\_ day  
of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_.

My Commission Expires: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

[SEAL]

Notary Public

### 13. Insurance Requirements

The following requirements are baseline standards for insurance to be provided. They may require adjustment from time to time based on a variety of factors, including the nature, scope, duration, and value of the procurement, and are subject to approval of the City.

A. Worker's Compensation and Employer's Liability with limits not less than:

- (1) Worker's Compensation: Statutory
- (2) Employer's Liability:
  - \$500,000 injury-per occurrence
  - \$500,000 disease-per employee
  - \$500,000 disease-policy limit

Such insurance shall evidence that coverage applies in the State of Illinois.

B. Comprehensive Motor Vehicle Liability with a combined single limit of liability for bodily injury and property damage of not less than \$1,000,000 for vehicles owned, non-owned, or rented.

All employees shall be included as insureds.

C. Comprehensive General Liability with coverage written on an "occurrence" basis and with limits no less than:

\$2,000,000 Bodily Injury and Property Damage Combined Single Limit

Coverage is to be written on an "occurrence" basis.

Coverages shall include:

- Broad Form Property Damage Endorsement
- Blanket Contractual Liability (must expressly cover the indemnity provisions of the Contract)
- Independent Contractors
- Personal Injury (with Employment Exclusion deleted)
- Broad Form Property Damage Endorsement
- Bodily Injury and Property Damage

D. Professional Liability Insurance, with a limit of liability of not less than \$2,000,000 per occurrence and \$2,000,000 in the aggregate and covering the consultant's errors and omissions.

E. Umbrella Policy. The required coverages may be in any combination of primary, excess, and umbrella policies. Any excess or umbrella policy must provide excess coverage over underlying insurance on a following-form basis such that when any loss covered by the primary policy exceeds the limits under the primary policy, the excess or umbrella policy becomes effective to cover such loss.

F. Additional Insured. The City shall be named as an Additional Insured on all policies except for:

Worker's Compensation                      Professional Liability (if applicable)

Each such additional Insured endorsement shall identify the City by name and also include its elected and appointed officials, its officers, employees, agents, attorneys, consultants, and representatives.