



CITY OF SEATTLE

office of economic development

only in seattle

**Request for Qualifications
Business Improvement Area Consulting**

The City of Seattle's Office of Economic Development (OED) is seeking one or more Consultants to assist neighborhood business districts in creating and/or modifying Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) in conjunction with OED and the Department of Finance and Administrative Services (FAS). BIAs are funding mechanisms for business district revitalization and management. Specifically, the mechanism is an assessment collected from businesses and/or properties within defined boundaries. The funds collected are used to provide services for the mutual benefit of the businesses and properties being assessed. BIA technical assistance and support is an integral part of the Office of Economic Development's (OED) Only in Seattle Initiative services.

Summary

The Only in Seattle Initiative is an OED program to foster districts that:

- Allow small businesses to grow and flourish, making a positive contribution to the city's economic health,
- Reflect the unique character of the neighborhoods where they are located and contribute to their vitality, and
- Empower business owners to organize around a common vision and attract investment.

The Only in Seattle Initiative provides seed funding and support to help business districts move ahead of their current state to a new level of organization and operations. Participating districts develop strategic visions of where they want to be, action plans to achieve the vision and clear outcomes intended from the work. The action plans are focused on making an impact in the business district and building a foundation for long-term sustainability. OED invests grant dollars, technical assistance resources and staff time in each participating business district.

Support and assistance in creating a Business Improvement Area is one of the services offered to business districts. Business districts submit proposals for grant funding and/or technical assistance in the fall and OED makes investment decisions for the upcoming year. The BIA consultant would receive a contract with OED with a final scope of work based on the needs identified during the proposal process.

Typical Tasks

BIA Concept Orientations - The Consultant/s will conduct orientation meetings to explain the BIA development process and schedule with business districts that express interest in forming a BIA.

Facilitate the Development of a BIA Proposal – The Consultant/s will work closely with OED staff and district leaders to: facilitate meetings to identify priorities and establish goals for the BIA resulting in a work plan for the BIA effort; determine a budget for the BIA; explore possible assessment formulas based on actual data from the district; develop a sales package to use for outreach to the ratepayers in the proposed district; develop BIA formation documents such as the petition package; and provide strategic guidance on the outreach plan.

BIA Formation Follow-through - In close consultation with OED, Consultant/s will update property data, assessment formulas, and BIA strategies; meet with district leadership for strategizing and coaching; visit key potential ratepayers; prepare and deliver public presentations; advise on outreach strategies; and otherwise help these districts complete their BIA formation as time and budget allow.

Existing BIA Modifications - In close consultation with OED, Consultant/s will meet with existing BIA leadership to assess and consider alternatives for BIA modification. Specific services may include analyzing data, assessment formulas, and BIA strategies; strategizing and coaching; key ratepayer visits; public presentations; outreach strategy development and other tasks to help these districts modify their BIAs.

Ad-Hoc BIA Research and Assistance - Consultant/s will be available as needed for BIA research and for issues that may arise for existing BIAs. Consultant/s will work with OED staff to answer requests on a needed basis as time and budget permits.

Organizational Development – Districts developing new or modified BIAs may require technical assistance, coaching and support to design an effective organizational structure to carry out the work required by the BIA work plan. In close consultation with OED staff and district leaders, Consultant/s may be required to provide advice and direction on the options for organizational structures, and guidance on how the BIA Ratepayers Advisory Board relates to the Program Manager organization.

Required Qualifications

- Have demonstrated skills and background in strategic planning, community organizing, outreach and communications and meeting and process facilitation for controversial and contentious plans;
- Be familiar with OED's Only in Seattle business district revitalization program and investment approach;
- Have a local office and staff that can be dedicated to this work;
- Have expertise in collecting, analyzing and working with data sets particularly King County Property Assessor data and Geographic Information Systems.
- Have demonstrated skills and experience working with nonprofit and community organizations to develop leadership and organizational structures to set policies and procedures and oversee budgets and work programs.

Desired Qualifications

- Have a background in business organizational development and business district revitalization work, Consultant/s will be required to provide specific examples of past work for other business districts or cities;
- Have technical expertise in Business Improvement Areas, Business Improvement Districts, Local Improvement Districts or other similar assessment structures, particularly with an understanding of the BIA structure used in the State of Washington and BIA policies and procedures in the City of Seattle;
- Have experience working with a City Council and following a detailed process to enact legislation.

Timeline

- October 22, 2015 – RFQ Released
- November 22, 2015 – RFQ Due
- December 7, 2015 – Notification of selection
- January 1-31, 2016 – Consultant/s Contract/s Finalized
- Feb 1, 2016 – Begin Work

BUDGET

Total budget for this work will be negotiated based on business district needs identified in proposal process.

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ) SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Responses to the RFQ must include:

1. A description of your organization/firm's experience and qualifications as it pertains to the work described. If you are interested in applying your expertise to only some of the tasks described, also specify which tasks those are.
2. Submission of qualifications and background for key staff
3. Specific examples of similar work performed
4. At least 2 references with contact information
5. Hourly billable rate

SUBMISSION PROCESS

An electronic submission of your response must arrive no later than 11:59 p.m. PST on Sunday, November 22, 2015 to:

Theresa Barreras
Office of Economic Development
theresa.barreras@seattle.gov

SCHEDULE

Submission deadline: November 22, 2015 (11:59 PM PST)

Notification of selection: December 7, 2015

Contract executed by: January 31, 2016

OED and FAS staff will review the responses to this RFQ and select the successful respondent.

CONTRACT

OED will develop a contract with the successful consultant. The contract will include a scope of work and project milestones and outcomes. Reimbursement will be based on achievement of project milestones and outcomes. OED retains the right to revise budget requests to reflect funding availability.

PROTEST PROCEDURES

The City of Seattle retains the right to reject any responses and is not required to award any funds if in its opinion the response failed to meet its requirements.

In the event that an unsuccessful RFQ respondent wishes to protest the selection of a successful respondent, they must do so by submitting in writing the reason for the protest to the Director of OED. Any such protest must be received within three (3) business days of receipt of notification of the successful respondent.

The decision of the Director will be final and conclusive unless the respondent affected makes a written request for reconsideration by the Director. Such a request must be received within three (3) business days after receipt of the Director's decision. A request for reconsideration will be denied unless the respondent affected shows the request is based on information that was not available prior to the protest. The Director shall consider all the facts available and issue a decision within five (5) business days after receipt of the request for rehearing, unless additional time is necessary, in which case, the affected respondent will be notified of the delay.

WOMEN AND MINORITY-OWNED BUSINESS USE REQUIREMENTS

There will be no Women and Minority-Owned Business (WMBE) set-aside requirements on the resulting contract. However, in accordance with the Seattle Municipal Code 20.46A, the selected contractor will be required to make affirmative efforts to utilize WMBEs in performing the contract, whether as subcontractors, suppliers, or in any other capacity. The selected contractor must also comply with affirmative action and equal employment opportunity provisions mandated by SMC 20.44.

FAIR CONTRACTING PRACTICES ORDINANCE

The selected contractors will be required to comply with the Fair Contracting Practices Ordinance of the City of Seattle (Ordinance 119601), as amended. Conduct made unlawful by that ordinance constitutes a breach of contract. Engaging in an unfair contracting practice may also result in the imposition of a civil fine or forfeiture under the Seattle Criminal Code as well as various civil remedies.

QUESTIONS

If you have any questions about this RFQ, please contact Theresa Barreras at (206) 684-4505 or theresa.barreras@seattle.gov