



District of Columbia
Department of
Housing and
Community
Development

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REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

To Develop an Online Database of Available and Affordable Housing Units

Appropriated Funding

Issue Date: March 14, 2008

Closing Date: April 11, 2008



*The District Department of Housing and Community Development
pledges to foster the letter and spirit of the law for achieving equal
housing opportunity in the District of Columbia.*

**LATE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE FORWARDED TO THE
REVIEW PANEL**



Checklist for Proposals

Verify that the proposal form and attachments conform to all instructions.

Only complete and accurate application packages will be forwarded for review.

- The proposal is printed on 8½ by 11-inch paper, on one side, using 12-point type.
- Word limits are observed.
- The proposal is unbound (other than binder clips per the instructions).
- The proposal package has three holes punched in the left margins.
- There are eight (9) copies of the proposal (following the same format as above), one of which is the original.
- The electronic version of the proposal is submitted on a CD or via email.
- Two original completed Receipts (see RFA Attachment C) attached to the outside of the envelopes or packages for DHCD's approval upon receipt.
- The proposal package includes the requested attachments (listed below):
 - o Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws (Exhibit A)
 - o Organizational chart (Exhibit B)
 - o Staff resumes (Exhibit C)
 - o Contact information for three organizations for which similar service was performed (Exhibit D)
 - o Audited Financial Statements for the most recent 3 years (Exhibit E)
 - o Assurances (See RFA Attachment A)
 - o Certifications (Lobbying, Drug-Free, etc.) (see RFA Attachment B)
 - o Two Original Receipts (see RFA Attachment C)
 - o Equal Opportunity Certification Form (see RFA Attachment D)
 - o Section 504 Certification Form (see RFA Attachment E)
 - o Tax-exempt status determination letter (Attachment F)
 - o Certificate of Good Standing from DCRA (Attachment G)



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District of Columbia
Department of Housing and Community Development
Request for Applications (RFA)
Database of Available and Affordable Housing Units

SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

Introduction

The District of Columbia government is committed to increasing the affordable housing opportunities for rental and homeownership. The Department of Housing and Community Development, working in partnership with the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development, the District of Columbia Housing Authority, and the District of Columbia's Housing Finance Agency are creating initiatives which are specifically designed to increase awareness among all District residents and government's employees

Purpose of Request for Application (RFA)

The purpose of this Request for Applications (RFA) is to solicit applications for Grants to **develop a fully interactive, user-friendly, web-based database, accessible through the internet and by call center, of affordable rental and homeownership units in the District of Columbia.**

Award Period

The approved activity should be ready to start during the second quarter of FY 2008. Activity work plans, (including the Scope of Work) and budgets for the creation of the database and call center are anticipated to be approved for a period of one year, with an option to extend the Grant for up to two additional one-year periods.

SECTION 2: RESPONDENT QUALIFICATIONS

Eligible Organizations

Proposals are requested from qualified organizations that have a history of serving those seeking housing opportunity through the activities outlined in this document, including technical capacity, understanding of federal and local housing subsidy programs, and experience in the housing industry (See Section 3: Web-Based Registry). DHCD encourages responses that reflect the concerns of the diverse populations and cultures found throughout the District of Columbia's communities, including the disabled and homeless.

Organizational Capacity

A successful respondent has the staff and board resources available to design and conduct the activities indicated in this RFA. The respondent's overall administrative capacity as it relates to all requirements of project management will be closely examined. Respondents will be evaluated on the basis of financial management capability, staff qualifications, administrative capability, credit-worthiness, and demonstrated understanding of all issues involved in performing all activities required under this RFA.

Experience-based Evidence of Performance

A successful respondent must demonstrate the following: an understanding of the complex social and economic factors affecting affordable housing in the District, provide evidence of previous accomplishments that provided a similar service to individuals searching for housing, and reveal how their efforts will provide the high-quality services anticipated in this RFA. The proposed plan for this project should result in measurable outcomes for the District of Columbia government as noted in Section 3: Activity Requirements and Priorities.

Technical Capacity

A successful respondent must demonstrate the technical capacity to create and administer an online, multi-user database which will be available 24/7 except for scheduled maintenance. The respondent must prove that the database that can be updated at least every two weeks.

In addition, a successful respondent must demonstrate the technical capacity to develop and implement a call center available between 8:15 A.M. and 6:00 P.M, Eastern Standard Time.

Threshold Applicant Requirements (required of any respondent for the proposal to be considered for selection)

In addition to demonstrating capacity, a successful respondent must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- The respondent must be a non-profit/tax-exempt corporation, so designated by the Internal Revenue Service.
- The respondent must be certified as a non-profit organization by the DC Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA).
- The respondent must be in Good Standing in the District of Columbia and must be current on all obligations to the District and Federal governments (i.e., Federal and local taxes, and outstanding loans).
- The respondent must have written Conflict of Interest policies and procedures governing employees and board members in regard to the award and administration of grants and other financial interests and benefits. These procedures must include a requirement for the retention of Conflict of Interest declarations executed by each employee and board member.
- *Nondiscrimination in the Delivery of Services.* The respondent must comply with federal and local laws which prohibit discrimination in the delivery of program and services, including, but not limited to, the following laws and regulations:
 - 1) Language Access Act of 2004 (LAA)- Provide greater access and participation for Limited English Proficient and No-English Proficient individuals to District government programs, activities and public services. All covered District government agencies, departments, or programs that furnishes information or renders services, programs, or activities directly to the public or Grants with other entities, either directly or indirectly, to conduct programs, services, or activities must comply with the LAA.

- 2) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq.)- Prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance.
- 3) Section 109 of Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (24 CFR Parts 6,180,570) - No person on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or religion, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity funded in whole or in part with community development funds.
- 4) The Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (42 U.S.C. 6101-07)- Prohibits discrimination on the basis of age in programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance.
- 5) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (24 CFR Part 8), - Provides that "no otherwise qualified individual with handicaps in the United States ...shall solely by reason of his handicap be excluded from the participation in be denied the benefits of or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance...".
- 5) Americans With Disabilities Act, Title I Employment - Prohibits discrimination in all employment practices, including job application procedures, hiring, firing, advancement, compensation, training, and other terms, conditions, and privileges of employment. It applies to recruitment, advertising, tenure, layoff, leave, fringe benefits, and all other employment-related activities. Employment discrimination is prohibited against "qualified individuals with disabilities" and persons who have a known association or relationship with a disabled individual.
- 6) All federal and local laws and regulations which offer consumer protections from prohibited lending practices; also, the District of Columbia's Lending Revisions Act of 2002 (14-354) and mortgage foreclosure procedures enacted in the "Mortgage Foreclosure Procedures Reform Act of 2003."

SECTION 3: ACTIVITY REQUIREMENTS & PRIORITIES

Database of Available Affordable Housing Units

The District of Columbia has made significant strides in its efforts to increase opportunities for affordable housing, both rental and homeownership. To meet the needs of those seeking information on available affordable housing units in the District, DHCD is seeking a qualified grantee to provide a service that will be a central online location of available and affordable units. The respondent must demonstrate skills and experience in website development, outreach, database development and management by the requirements described here.

Website:

The grantee will develop, host, and maintain a web-based, searchable, and real-time database service of affordable rental and for-sale of publically and privately-developed housing units, with the following minimum standards:

- The fields to be included on each project may include, but not be limited to, the following: the name of the building, address of the unit, number of units, and amenities (such as availability of parking), number of affordable housing units available, number of market units available, management company name, number of bedrooms/ baths available in each affordable unit, affordable housing units for sale or rental, purchase price ranges for affordable for-sale units, distance to amenities such as public transportation and grocery stores, accessibility features, application requirements, and construction completion date.
- The Website will be available 24/7 except for scheduled maintenance.
- The site will be available in English and Spanish.
- The website will be linked to the Mayor's website, and will conform to the sub-website requirements of the DC Office of the Chief Technology Officer.
- The site must also include a resource page to integrate with the District's Housing Resource Center, which is in process of expansion and development by DHCD's Housing Regulation Administration (HRA).
- The website will post the appropriate non-discrimination notices required by local and federal laws, i.e., the non-discrimination clause the EHO logo, the accessibility logo, and ELO.

Call Center

The grantee will also develop and implement a call center to support the searchable website, staffed by professionals available in English and Spanish. Call center staff will provide technical assistance, perform searches for clients with limited internet access, and provide the results of the search via telephone, mail, or fax. The grantee will also put in place procedures to minimize client wait time during periods of high call volumes.

Data and Reporting

The grantee will also provide daily data updates on the number of available and total units, the number of landlords, location of units, number of searches, and other data as requested by the Department of Housing and Community Development.

The respondent will submit a plan for the entire process of database website development, implementation, and management. This plan will include proposed timelines for completion of collection of database information, presentation of website design options to District officials, hosting capabilities, launch dates, frequency of updates, information to be updated, website enhancements, database enhancements, outreach to landlords and residents, marketing of the website, reports available, types of searches, etc. The applicant must demonstrate skills and experience in website design and website maintenance by the requirements described herein.

Threshold Activity Requirements (required of any proposed program of activities for an application to be considered for selection)

In addition to demonstrating the ability to meet activity requirements described above, any project receiving funding under this RFA must meet, where applicable, the following threshold requirements for the activities proposed in response to this RFA:

- Respondents and potential respondents are notified that all submissions related to this Request for Applications process are subject to the requirements of the District of Columbia Freedom of Information Act of 1976 (DCFOIA); Pub. L. 614, D.C. Code 2-531 et seq after the date of award.

SECTION 4: SELECTION PROCESS

Selection Criteria -- 200 points

Criterion	Points Available
Staff—	15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposal describes organizational staff possessing skills and experience appropriate to the organization's mission and activities. 	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The grantee can represent the concerns of DC residents and potential residents in completing these activities. 	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The grantee possesses skills and/or experience required to implement this project. 	10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The grantee possesses the legal, business administration, and management to implement this project in partnership with the District government. 	
Financial Management—	10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposal evidences the financial stability of the organization. 	10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposal describes financial controls and auditing functions currently in place to manage finances, information, and administrative functions. 	10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposal demonstrates the organization's ability to assemble the monetary resources necessary to undertake the activities described. 	
Experience—	10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposal evidences the organization's experience in successfully implementing similar outcome-based activities. 	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposal demonstrates the organization's ability to evaluate activity outcomes. 	10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposal demonstrates the organization's ability to manage and evaluate activity progress. 	10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the call center, the proposal demonstrates significant experience and skill to provide quality customer service and search services in English and Spanish. 	
Total	100

Selection Criteria

Criterion	Points Available
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The respondent presents data and cogent analysis which demonstrates clear understanding of the activity. 	10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposal demonstrates a clear, reasonable, detailed plan for implementation of the activity proposed, including a detailed timeline and marketing and outreach plan. 	20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the web-based database, the respondent demonstrates significant experience and skill in web design, web site development and management, and database research and management in the area of affordable housing. 	25
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposal describes the organization's experience in successfully implementing projects similar to those proposed. 	15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposal identifies the total budget necessary to achieve those outcomes broken down by individual activity. 	10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposal describes how the organization leverages resources to support and enhance outcomes; the proposal indicates clear relationships and tasks within District government necessary to complete this activity. 	10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposal establishes outcome and success measures and review period to evaluate success. 	10
Total	100

Review Panel

The review panel for this RFA is composed of neutral and qualified professional individuals who have been selected for their unique experiences in affordable housing, database development and management, and website development and management.

When the review panel has completed its evaluations, the panel will make recommendations for awards based on the highest combined scores for the selection criteria of the application. The process of evaluating proposals may require respondents to make an oral presentation before the panel and/or require the panel to conduct a site visit of the respondent's facility.

Decision on Awards

DHCD will convene a review panel of staff within the Department as well as staff from other District housing agencies, including The Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development, The Housing Authority, and the Housing Finance Agency. The recommendations of the review panel are advisory only and are not binding on the Department of Housing and Community Development. The final decision on awards rests solely with the Director of DHCD. After reviewing the recommendations of the review panel and any other information considered relevant, the Agency Director will determine the award funds to the designated grantee.

Post-Selection

The respondent whose proposal is approved for funding will be required to enter into a grant agreement with DHCD for implementation of the approved activity. This grant agreement will include provisions that will ensure compliance with District laws and regulations and define the terms of the disbursement of funds.

Upon execution of the agreement, which is anticipated to be during the second quarter of FY 2008, the organization will receive the first scheduled fund disbursement.

In accordance with District requirements, DHCD will conduct periodic evaluations of the grantee's use of appropriated funds. Accordingly, the grantee will be required to make available to DHCD all information and records necessary for the completion of its evaluation.

Contact Person

For further information, please contact:

Kathryn Howell

Strategic Programs Specialist

Department of Housing and Community Development

801 North Capitol Street, NE, 6th Floor

Washington, DC 20002

202-442-7255

202-442-8391 (fax)

Kathryn.Howell@dc.gov.

SECTION 5: PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS

Format

There are four parts to the proposal package:

- Written Proposal
- Itemized Budget
- Attachments
- Electronic version of proposal on CD

Internet

Respondents who obtained this RFA through the Internet are asked to provide the Department of Housing and Community Development with the following:

- Name of organization
- Key contact
- Mailing address
- Telephone and fax numbers.

This information is requested so that the respondent can receive updates and/or addenda to the RFA.

Proposal Instructions

The written proposal should be printed out on **one side, on 8½ by 11-inch paper** with three holes punched at the side (long) edge.

Margins must be no less than one inch and 12 point font is required (New Times Roman, Courier, or Arial Narrow type recommended). Pages **MUST** be numbered. **The review panel will not review proposals that do not conform to these requirements.**

Proposal packages should have:

- No binding or covers
- No staples
- No attachments other than those requested

Required Attachments

The following attachments to the completed form are required:

Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws (Exhibit A)
Organizational Chart (Exhibit B)
Staff Resumes (Exhibit C)
Recommendation Contacts (Exhibit D)
Audited Financial Statements (Exhibit E)
Assurances (RFA Attachment A)
Certifications (Lobbying, Drug-Free, etc.) (RFA Attachment B)
Two Original Receipts (RFA Attachment C)
Equal Opportunity Certification (RFA Attachment D)
Section 504 Certification Form (RFA Attachment E)
Federal tax-exempt status determination letter (Attachment F)
Certificate of Good Standing from DCRA (obtained within the past three months) (Attachment H)

The Attachments package should be arranged in the order items are listed with three holes punched (i.e., with a standard 3-hole punch) and attached with a binder clip. The entire package should then be attached to Part 1 of the proposal form with an additional binder clip. Questions related to Attachments **D**, **and E** may be directed to Ms. Sonia Gutierrez, Fair Housing Coordinator at (202) 442-7238.

Respondents may obtain the Certificate of Good Standing at DCRA's One-Stop Business Center located in Room 1100 at 941 North Capitol Street, NE; the certificate may be requested by mail to Ms. Regina Dobbins, DCRA Corporations Division, 941 North Capitol Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002. There is a \$20 fee for the certificate. For additional information, call the Corporations Division at (202) 442-4432.

Explanations to Prospective Respondents

Respondents are encouraged to mail, e-mail, or fax their questions to the contact person listed above on or before March 24, 2008. Questions submitted after the deadline date will not receive responses. Please allow ample time for mail to be received prior to the deadline date.

Resources

For more information about the Department of Housing and Community Development, please visit: <http://www.dhcd.dc.gov/main.shtm> .

A wide range of information regarding community development issues and funding opportunities can be found at: <http://www.knowledgeplex.org> .

SECTION 6: PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Proposal Identification

A total of nine (9) proposals, and an electronic version on one CD, are to be submitted in an envelope or package. Attachment C (Receipt) should be affixed to the outside of the envelope or package. **Of the nine (9) proposals, one (1) proposal must be an original. DHCD will not forward the proposal to the review panel if the respondent fails to submit the required eight (8) copies, plus one (1) original.**

Telephonic, telegraphic and facsimile submissions **will not be accepted.**

Proposal Submission Date and Time

Proposals are due no later than 4:00 p.m. on April 11, 2008. All proposals will be recorded upon receipt. Proposals **submitted at or after 4:01 p.m., April 11, 2008** will not be forwarded to the review panel. Any additions or deletions to a proposal will not be accepted after the deadline.

The eight (8) copies, plus the original and CD, **must be** delivered to the following location:

Department of Housing and Community Development
Office of the Director
801 North Capitol Street, NE
8th Floor
Washington, DC 20002
Attention: Kathryn Howell

Mail/Courier/Messenger Delivery

Proposals that are mailed or delivered by Messenger/Courier services **must be** sent in sufficient time to be received by the deadline at the above location. Messenger/Courier services delivering proposals at or after the post dated time **will not be accepted.**

*****Late Proposals Will Not Be Forwarded To the Review Panel*****

Notice of Non-Discrimination

In accordance with the D.C. Human Rights Act of 1977, as amended, D.C. Official Code Section 2-1401.01 et seq., (Act) the District of Columbia does not discriminate on the basis of actual or perceived: race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, familial status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, disability, source of income, or place of residence or business. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination which is also prohibited by the Act. In addition, harassment based on any of the above protected categories is also prohibited by the Act. Discrimination in violation of the Act will not be tolerated. Violators will be subject to disciplinary action.