

Request for Proposals

GRANT WRITING AND/OR GRANT ADMINISTRATION CONSULTING SERVICES

CITY OF PLATTSBURGH, NY



RFP Release Date: **Thursday, April 1, 2021**

Proposals Due: **Thursday, April 29, 2021 at 3:00 p.m. EST**

It is recommended that proposals be submitted in advance, at least one day prior to the specified date and time to allow for a timely receipt. LATE PROPOSALS will NOT be considered.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS DEFINITION:

An RFP defines the situation or object for which the goods and or services are required, how they are expected to be used and/or problems that they are expected to be addressed. Vendors are invited to propose solutions that will result in the satisfaction of the City's objectives in a cost-effective manner. The proposed solutions are evaluated against a predetermined set of criteria of which price may not be the primary consideration.

REQUESTS FOR PROPOSALS GRANT WRITING AND/OR GRANT ADMINISTRATION CONSULTING SERVICES

The City of Plattsburgh (hereinafter referred to as the “City”) is requesting Proposals from qualified public entity or private firms (hereinafter referred to as “Proposer” or “Respondent”) to provide grant writing and/or grant administration consulting services. Prior to submitting a Proposal, Proposers are advised to carefully read the instructions below, including any solicitation attachments/exhibits. The term of the agreement for consulting services is expected to be three (3) years with two (2) one-year options to renew.

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

The City of Plattsburgh is the county seat of Clinton County, New York and population center of the greater Plattsburgh Micropolitan Statistical Area. The City comprises an area of ~6.5 square miles with an approximate population of 19,989 (2010 Census). Located ~60 miles south of Montreal along the shores of Lake Champlain, Plattsburgh is a large shopping and vacation location for Canadian tourists and has been fondly referred to as Montreal’s suburb. It is accessible by all modes of transportation including Interstate I-87, a major north-south highway, US Route 9, NYS Route 22, and a variety of major highways that approach the City from the west.

Opened in 2006, the Plattsburgh International Airport is located south of the City’s Downtown. The airport is classified by the federal government as an essential air service site and has recently completed major expansion. An Amtrak station with service to Montreal, Albany, and New York City is located in the Dock Street corridor. There is also access to Vermont via ferry only five minutes north of the City in the Cumberland Head peninsula. Last, but not least, NYS’s Empire State Trail traverses the City through the core of its downtown and provides a dedicated multi-use path for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Plattsburgh also possesses numerous recreational assets including one of the longest freshwater beaches in the eastern United States with expansive views of Lake Champlain, the Adirondack Mountains, and the Green Mountains. An expansive trail system and an array of municipal parks serve the City as well. The Saranac River snakes through the City for several miles before emptying into Lake Champlain within view of the City’s downtown core and provides opportunities for fishing, kayaking, and other activities.

The City has a large portfolio of planning documents of various types completed during the previous twenty (20) years. These planning documents contain recommendations for a multitude of projects but the City is not in a financial position to fund many of these projects without assistance from outside sources. Additionally, the City currently administers a large stable of active grants and the administrative workload associated with their execution occupies considerable staffing resources across multiple City departments.

The successful Proposer shall have at least five years of prior experience on similar types of projects. All Proposers responding to this Request for Proposals (RFP) will be evaluated based on their expertise, prior experience on similar projects, demonstrated competence, ability to meet the project

schedule, adequate staffing, a reference check, project understanding, cost, and responsiveness to the needs and concerns of the City of Plattsburgh.

Important Notice: The City has attempted to provide all information available. It is the responsibility of each Proposer to review, evaluate, and, where necessary, request any clarification prior to submission of a Proposal. Proposers are not to contact other City personnel with any questions or clarifications concerning this RFP. The City’s primary contact listed below will provide all official communication concerning this RFP. Any City response relevant to this RFP other than those approved by the City’s Community Development Department is unauthorized and will be considered invalid.

Schedule of Events: This RFP shall be governed by the following schedule:

Release of RFP	April 1, 2021
Deadline for Written Questions	April 15, 2021 at 3:00 p.m.
Responses to Questions	April 20, 2021 (posted on City website)
Proposals are Due	April 29, 2021 at 3:00 p.m.
Interviews (if held)	May 10 – May 14, 2021
Approval of Contract TBD	

**All dates are subject to change at the sole discretion of the City.

II. PROPOSAL FORMAT

Interested entities or contractors are to provide the City with a thorough Proposal using the following guidelines: Proposals will adhere to the following limits for length:

- Grant writing services only: no more than twenty (20) pages
- Grant administration services only: no more than fifteen (15) pages
- Grant writing and grant administration services: no more than twenty-five (25) pages

The limits listed above shall include the transmittal letter and resumes of key staff but exclude any table of contents, tables, charts, graphic exhibits, and pricing forms. Emphasis should be concentrated on conforming to the RFP instructions, responding to the RFP requirements, and on providing a complete and clear description of the Proposal. Proposers must submit a detailed proposal which includes, at a minimum, the following:

- Define the methodology/approach to be used to identify the needs of the City which would be eligible for funding through grants.
- Detail the procedure you would utilize in identifying grants that address the needs identified below.
- Generally, detail the involvement and role of City staff and City resources in the grant writing and/or the grant administration process. Describe, in detail, the process you would utilize to prepare the actual grant applications and/or administrative submittals.
- List your experience in the identification, preparation, and/or administration of grants for municipalities. Specifically, detail your experience with federal and state grants for infrastructure improvement, parks and recreation, technology, community development, and capital assets.

- If including grant writing services in your Proposal, list a minimum of five (5) funded grants in the last three (3) years which you developed detailing the funding source, amount requested, and amount funded.
- If including grant administration services in your Proposal, list a minimum of five (5) grants you administered, in whole or in part, during the last three (3) years.
- Describe the background, experience, and qualifications of the person(s) who will act as the grant writer(s) and/or grant administrator(s) and the qualifications of any staff who will assist with the preparation of grant applications and/or with grant administration (include their role, education, relevant experience, and related qualifications).
- Provide at least three (3) references including the contact's name, affiliation, address, direct telephone number, and email address.
- Describe in detail the fee structure you propose for providing grant writing and/or grant administration services. A cost proposal form is provided as Attachment A to this RFP. If the fee structure you propose for grant writing services differs from the structure you propose for grant administration services, include separate fee structures for each service.

Important Notice: Proposers may include in their submittals proposals for grant writing services, grant administration services, or both grant writing and grant administration services. The City reserves the right to award contracts for grant writing services and grant administration services to different Proposers, to award contracts for both grant writing and grant administrative services to the same Proposer, or to reject all proposals if deemed to be in the City's best interest.

III. SCOPE OF WORK

Grant Writing Services

The following are typical grant writing services and/or items that the successful Respondent will be required to provide if awarded the contract and should be addressed in each proposal:

- Funding needs analysis – Work with the City's departments to assess the validity of current funding priority areas, review existing planning documents, and identify new priority areas for funding.
- Grant Funding Research – Conduct research to identify grant resources including, but not limited to, federal, state, local, foundation, agencies, and organizations that support the City's funding needs and priorities in the following general areas by way of illustration but not limitation:
 1. Economic and community development
 2. Infrastructure development and maintenance
 3. Parks and recreation programs
 4. Housing and housing programs
 5. Community and municipal planning
 6. Technology
 7. Multimodal transportation
 8. Workforce development
 9. Energy efficiency and sustainability

10. Records management

11. Public safety

- On-call Grant Research – In addition to the areas defined above, other areas may be also identified through the funding needs analysis process and throughout the duration of the contract.
- Grant Proposal Development – Provide grant proposal writing services associated with the completion of grant applications on behalf of the City, including the preparation of funding abstracts, production/compilation of grant application documentation, and submittal of applications to funding sources. A copy of each grant application submitted is to be provided to the City.
- Monthly Reports – the successful consultant shall submit monthly reports to the City summarizing the amount of time expended and describe activities undertaken during the previous month.

Grant Administration Services

The following are typical grant administration services and/or items that the successful Respondent will be required to provide if awarded the contract and should be addressed in each proposal:

- Assisting the City with meeting financial, administrative, and bookkeeping requirements of new and existing grants, including preparation of drawdown requests.
- Assisting the City with meeting record keeping requirements, including the establishment and maintenance of acceptable filing systems.
- Assisting the City with contract administration and compliance monitoring requirements.
- Furnishing the City with forms necessary for the implementation of project activities included in approved grant applications.
- Acting as liaison between the City, its other consultants and contractors, and applicable regulatory and funding agencies to ensure efficient, smoothly managed grant programs.
- Prepare program amendments as necessary during execution of grant project.
- Prepare and coordinate the submission of the appropriate documents for grant closeout and completion.

In addition to grant administration services in support of future grant awards, the chosen Respondent will also provide administrative support to the active grants currently being managed by City staff which are detailed in Attachment B. Proposers should include the estimated annual cost of administrative services associated with these existing grants in their cost proposal for grant administration services.

Insurance Requirements

All Respondents, if awarded a contract for services under this RFP, shall be required to procure and maintain during the term of said contract the following insurance policies with policy limits to be specified in the contract:

- Commercial general liability

- Business automobile liability
- Workers' compensation insurance as required by New York State
- Professional errors and omissions ("E&O") liability

IV. SUBMITTAL PROCESS

All Proposals, including completed cost proposals in the form prescribed in Attachment A, must be submitted using the format as indicated in the Proposal format guidelines. The cost for developing the Proposal is the sole responsibility of the Proposer. All Proposals submitted become the property of the City.

All questions regarding this RFP must be submitted via email no later than 3:00 p.m. EST on Thursday, April 15, 2021 to:

Matthew Miller
Director of Community Development
City of Plattsburgh
millerma@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov

No contact related to this solicitation with City officials, staff, or consultants, other than emails to the designated email account for the solicitation is permitted by Respondents or employed representatives of Respondent during the procurement period of this RFP. Any such contact by a Respondent will be grounds for disqualification.

Responses to questions submitted by the deadline will be posted on the City's website at <https://www.cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov/Bids.aspx> via an addendum to be published no later than Tuesday, April 20, 2021. The City reserves the right not to answer all questions received. There will not be a pre-proposal conference.

All Respondents must submit, in a sealed envelope, five (5) printed copies of their Proposal and one (1) digital copy of their Proposal on a USB drive to be received no later than 3:00 p.m. (EST) on Thursday, April 29, 2021 to the address below. Proposals will not be accepted after this deadline. Faxed or emailed Proposals will not be accepted. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**

City of Plattsburgh
Community Development Office
41 City Hall Place
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
RE: GRANT WRITING AND/OR GRANT ADMINISTRATION SERVICES RFP

The City, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to accept or reject any or all Proposals received as a result of this RFP, to negotiate with any qualified Respondent, or to cancel this RFP in part or

in its entirety. The City may waive any irregularity in any Proposal. If any proprietary information is contained in the Proposal, it should be clearly identified.

The City reserves the right to reject a Proposal if any item listed in this RFP is incomplete, improperly executed, indefinite, ambiguous, and/or is missing. Additionally, factors such as, but not limited to the following may also disqualify a Respondent without further consideration:

- a. Evidence of collusion among Respondents.
- b. Any attempt to improperly influence any member of the City’s evaluation committee or any of the City’s elected representatives.
- c. Discovery that a Respondent purposely misled or knowingly provided false or inaccurate information in a Proposal.
- d. Default by Respondent under any type of agreement, which resulted in the termination of that agreement.
- e. Existence of any unresolved litigation or legal dispute between the Respondent and the City.

V. EVALUATION CRITERIA & SELECTION PROCESS

The following criteria and weight factors shall be used to evaluate all Proposals received for ***GRANT WRITING SERVICES***:

1. Company Experience and Capabilities	25%
2. Approach and Methodology	25%
3. Staffing	20%
4. Qualifications and References	20%
5. Cost Proposal	10%

The following criteria and weight factors shall be used to evaluate all Proposals received for ***GRANT ADMINISTRATION SERVICES***:

1. Company Experience and Capabilities	20%
2. Approach and Methodology	15%
3. Staffing	20%
4. Qualifications and References	15%
5. Cost Proposal	30%

Based on an initial review of all Proposals completed in accordance with the weighted criteria set forth above by a Proposal Review Committee (the “Committee”) constituted by the City and consisting of City staff and, possibly, one or more outside experts, several Respondents may be short-listed for further consideration and may be required to submit supplemental information. The City may also choose to conduct interviews with the short-listed firms to gain a better understanding of their Proposal and capabilities. Interviews, if held, are tentatively scheduled for May 10, 2021 through May 14, 2021.

Following conclusion of this stage of the evaluation process, the Committee will rank all Proposers according to the criteria set forth above. The Committee may conclude the evaluation process at this point, and make a recommendation for award, or it may request Best and Final Offers from Proposers. The City may accept the Proposal or negotiate the terms and conditions of the agreement with the highest ranked firm, which shall be determined to be the lowest responsible bidder. The City may recommend award without Best and Final Offers, so Proposers should include their best Proposal with their initial submission.

The Committee may recommend award of contracts for grant writing services and grant administration services to different Respondents. Recommendation for award is contingent upon the successful negotiation of final contract terms. If contract negotiations cannot be concluded successfully within a reasonable period determined by the City, the City may terminate negotiations and commence negotiations with the next highest scoring Proposer or withdraw the RFP.

VI. STATEMENT OF LIMITATIONS

1. This RFP, submissions from Respondents to this RFP, and any relationship between the City and Respondents arising from or connected or related to this RFP, are subject to the specific limitations and representations expressed below, as well as the terms contained elsewhere in this RFP. By responding to this RFP, Respondents are deemed to accept and agree to this Statement of Limitations. By submitting a response to this RFP, the entity acknowledges and accepts the City's rights as set forth in the RFP, including this Statement of Limitations.
2. The issuance of this RFP and the submission of a response by any firm or the acceptance of such response by the City does not obligate the City in any manner whatsoever. Legal obligations will only arise upon execution of a formal contract by the City and the firm(s) selected by the City.
3. The City reserves the right: (i) to amend, modify, or withdraw this RFP; (ii) to revise any requirements of this RFP; (iii) to require supplemental statements or information from any responding party; (iv) to accept or reject any or all responses thereto; (v) to extend the deadline for submission of responses thereto; (vi) to negotiate or hold discussions with any Respondent (or multiple respondents) and to correct deficient responses which do not completely conform to the instructions contained herein; and (vii) to cancel, in whole or part, this RFP, for any reason or for no reason. The City may exercise the foregoing rights at any time without notice and without liability to any Respondent or any other party for its expenses incurred in the preparation of responses hereto or otherwise. Responses hereto will be prepared at the sole cost and expense of each Respondent.
4. All proposals submitted in response to this RFP shall be valid for ninety (90) days from the date of submittal and the City may hold responses for a period of up to ninety (90) days without taking action.

5. All information submitted in response to this RFP is subject to the Freedom of Information Law (FOIL), which generally mandates the disclosure of documents in the possession of the City upon the request of any person, unless the content of the document falls under a specific exemption to disclosure. If any Respondent wishes to claim that any information submitted in its response to this RFP constitutes a Trade Secret or is otherwise exempt from disclosure under FOIL, such claim must be made at the time of the response and must be in writing supported by relevant and material arguments.
6. This RFP shall not be construed in any manner to implement any of the actions contemplated herein, nor to serve as the basis for any claim whatsoever for reimbursement of costs for efforts expended in preparing a response to the RFP. The City will not be responsible for any costs incurred by Respondents related to preparing and submitting a response to this RFP, attending oral presentations, or for any other associated costs.
7. To the best of the City's knowledge, the information provided herein is accurate. Respondents should undertake appropriate investigation in preparation of responses.
8. This solicitation and any contract or agreements resulting herein are subject to all applicable Federal, State, and local laws, rules, regulations, and executive orders.
9. The City shall not be obligated to pay any fee, cost, or expense for brokerage commissions or finder's fees with respect to the execution of the contract. It shall be a condition of any contract that the Respondent agree to pay the commission or other compensation due to any broker or finder in connection with the transaction, and to indemnify and hold harmless the City from any obligation, liability, cost, or expense incurred by it as a result of any claim for commission or compensation brought by any broker or finder by reason of the transaction.
10. The City reserves the right to modify the requirements set forth herein and to expand, limit or otherwise alter the scope of the requested services.

ATTACHMENT A

**COST PROPOSAL FOR
GRANT WRITING SERVICES**

Provide staffing information, hourly rates, and estimated annual pricing, in accordance with the City's current requirements, as set forth in the Scope of Work section of the Request for Proposals. Pricing shall remain firm for a minimum of two (2) years. All pricing adjustments for contract renewal periods shall be provided no later than sixty (60) days prior to the end of the contract period.

If providing a separate cost proposal for grant administration services, please complete the tables on the following page.

Employee Name / Title / Years of Experience	Hourly Rate	Hours per Month	Total Cost per Month
	\$		\$
	\$		\$
	\$		\$
	\$		\$
	\$		\$
	\$		\$
	\$		\$
	\$		\$
	\$		\$
	\$		\$

Total Estimated Annual Cost of Grant Writing Services	\$
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**COST PROPOSAL FOR
GRANT ADMINISTRATION SERVICES**

Provide staffing information, hourly rates, and estimated annual pricing, in accordance with the City’s current requirements, as set forth in the Scope of Work section of the Request for Proposals. Pricing shall remain firm for a minimum of two (2) years. All pricing adjustments for contract renewal periods shall be provided no later than sixty (60) days prior to the end of the contract period.

If providing a separate cost proposal for grant writing services, please complete the tables on the preceding page.

Employee Name / Title / Years of Experience	Hourly Rate	Hours per Month	Total Cost per Month
	\$		\$
	\$		\$
	\$		\$
	\$		\$
	\$		\$
	\$		\$
	\$		\$
	\$		\$
	\$		\$
	\$		\$

Total Estimated Annual Cost of Grant Administration Services	\$
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Attachment B

City of Plattsburgh - Active Grants as of April 2021							
Project Name	Funding Source	Formal Contract in Place	Grant Amount	Reimbursement Schedule	Other Reporting Requirements	Status	Estimated Completion Date
Community Development Department							
Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI): Streetscape Improvements & Riverfront Access	NYS Department of State	Yes	\$2,900,000	<i>Quarterly - March, June, Sept, Dec</i>	Bi-annual status reports & quarterly MWBE reporting	Ongoing	Summer 2022
Saranac River Trail Phase II (2 pedestrian bridges & trail network)	NYS Department of Transportation	Yes	\$1,600,000	Monthly (or as needed)	Status report with reimbursement	Ongoing	Fall 2021
DRI: Downtown Grant Program (capital improvement grants to individual property owners)	NYS Homes and Community Renewal	Yes	\$1,205,000	At project completion	Monthly Status Reports & Final Project Report with relevant backup documentation	Ongoing	Winter 2021/2022
Municipal Lighting Department (MLD) Site Demolition	NYS Empire State Development (RESTORE NY Program)	Yes	\$831,000	At project completion	Final status report	Grant Disbursement Agreement Pending	Summer 2021
Downtown Parking System Improvements	NYS Department of State [via NYS Financial Restructuring Board (FRB)]	Yes	\$825,000	At project completion	Final Status Report and relevant backup documentation	Ongoing	Fall 2021
Vilas Home Expansion (City as pass-through agent)	NYS Homes and Community Renewal (CDBG)	No	\$750,000	Monthly (or as needed)	Status report with reimbursement	HCR board review scheduled for April 2021	Summer 2022
Saranac River Trail Phase II (2 pedestrian bridges & trail network)	NYS Office of Parks, Recreation, & Historic Preservation	Yes	\$500,000	Monthly (or as needed)	Status report with reimbursement	Ongoing	Fall 2021
DRI: Durkee Mixed-Use Development Project (consulting grant for project management)	NYS Empire State Development	Yes	\$300,000	At project completion	Final status report	Grand Disbursement Agreement Pending	Summer 2021
Replacement of City Hall Windows	Dormitory Authority of NYS	Yes	\$300,000	Monthly (or as needed)	Final status report	Ongoing	Spring 2022
DRI: Dock Street Highest & Best Use Study/MLD Demo match	NYS Empire State Development	Yes	\$290,000	At project completion	Final status report	Grant Disbursement Agreement Pending	Summer 2021
DRI: Marketing, Branding, & Signage	NYS Department of State	Yes	\$250,000	<i>Quarterly - March, June, Sept, Dec</i>	Bi-annual status reports & quarterly MWBE reporting	Ongoing	Spring 2022
Finalize LWRP & Update City Comprehensive Plan/Zoning Ordinance	NYS Department of State	Yes	\$125,000	<i>Quarterly - March, June, Sept, Dec</i>	Bi-annual status reports & quarterly MWBE reporting	Ongoing	Spring 2022
Harborside Master Plan Grant	NYS Department of State	Yes	\$109,000	<i>Quarterly - March, June, Sept, Dec</i>	Bi-annual status reports & quarterly MWBE reporting	Consultant RFP Responses under Review	Spring 2022
County LWRP: Harborside Improvements	NYS Department of State	No	\$65,000	<i>Quarterly - March, June, Sept, Dec</i>	Bi-annual status reports & quarterly MWBE reporting	Seeking grant extension to March 2022	Spring 2022

Climate Smart Communities Planning Grant	NYS Department of Environmental Conservation	No	\$30,000	TBD	TBD	Grant Award Secured & Contract Pending	TBD
Water/Sewer Department							
Water Resource Recovery Facility Mitigation (sewage treatment plant improvements)	NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation (WIIA)	Yes	\$4,600,000	Monthly	Monthly Status Reports	Ongoing	Fall 2023
Water System Improvements	NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation (WIIA)	No	\$3,000,000	Monthly	TBD	Grant Award Secured & Contract Pending	Fall 2024
Plattsburgh Public Library							
Library Roof Replacement & Other Capital Improvements	NYS Education Department	No	\$298,070	90% upfront /final 10% at completion	Final Status Report	Not Started	Summer 2022
Library Exterior Door & Elevator Air Purifier	NYS Education Department	No	\$8,640	90% upfront/final 10% at completion	Final Status Report	Ongoing	Summer 2022
Police Department							
Stone Garden Grant	Federal Emergency Management Agency	Yes	\$314,261	At Completion	Invoice Submittals	Ongoing	Summer 2021
STOP DWI Grant	NYS	Yes	\$3,500	Monthly	Invoice Submittals	Ongoing	2021
BVP Grant - Bullet Proof Vests	US Department of Justice	Yes	50% of Cost	After Purchases	Invoice Submittals	Not Started	2021
Police Traffic Safety Grant	NYS	Yes	Depends on Activity	Monthly	Invoice Submittals	Ongoing	2021
Public Works Department							
Pedestrian Safety Action Plan (PSAP) Intersection Improvements	NYS Department of Transportation	Yes	\$576,000	Monthly	Invoice Submittals	Ongoing	2022
Finance Department							
City-Wide Property Revaluation	NYS Department of State (via NYS FRB)	No	\$425,000	At project completion	Final Status Report and relevant backup documentation	Ongoing	2021
Administrative Restructuring of City Departments	NYS Department of State (via NYS FRB)	No	\$125,000	At project completion	Final Status Report and relevant backup documentation	Ongoing	2021
Installation of Boat Docks at City Marina	NYS Department of State (via NYS FRB)	No	\$50,000	At project completion	Final Status Report and relevant backup documentation	Ongoing	2021
Relocation of Finance Department	NYS Department of State (via NYS FRB)	No	\$45,000	At project completion	Final Status Report and relevant backup documentation	Ongoing	2021
Total Amount of all Active Grants			\$19,525,471				