



## City of Norman

Request for Proposals for a Homelessness Strategic Plan

RFP 2021-24

DUE 4:00 PM CDT, Friday, September 25, 2020

### I. Introduction

#### A. Solicitation

The City of Norman, Oklahoma, with municipal offices located at 201-A West Gray, P.O. Box 370, Norman, Oklahoma, 73070 is seeking professional expertise to analyze its current provision of homeless services. The scope of analyzation includes but is not limited to identifying gaps and duplications across providers, recommendations of the best built solution(s) to improve the community's overall safety net, including preferred sites and long term operating practices, and to review existing benchmarking efforts. These efforts should be summarized in a final written strategy document.

The City invites the submission of proposals to complete the Scope of Services described in Section II of this Request for Proposals (RFP).

#### B. Community Background

The City of Norman is a growing community located 20 miles south of the state capitol, Oklahoma City, and 200 miles north of Dallas. Interstate 35 runs north and south through Norman near the western edge. Norman is home to the University of Oklahoma, the National Weather Center, and Griffin Memorial Hospital, as well as several nationally known companies. With a growing population of over 124,000, Norman is part of the dynamic Oklahoma City Metropolitan Area, which has over a 1.4 million residents.

Norman is the third largest city in Oklahoma and the largest city in Cleveland County for which it serves as the county seat. The City of Norman encompasses approximately 190 square miles with more than half of that being rural. A healthy employment rate, low cost of living, quality schools and a nationally-known institute of higher education (the University of Oklahoma) have all helped to drive a 30.5% growth rate since the year 2000, increasing the population from 95,694 to its current level of 124,880.

The City of Norman is currently implementing a package of quality of life projects using an additional sales tax under the shared Norman Forward brand. In June of 2020, the Norman City Council chose to seek additional funds to address funding deficits for the remaining Norman Forward projects through a public vote scheduled for August 25, 2020. This Norman Forward addition will appear as Proposition #1 on the ballot. City Council also chose to include three other propositions on the same ballot, including Proposition #2, which, if passed, would provide \$5 million to construct or establish one or more facilities to address homelessness within Norman. No operation or maintenance funds for the contemplated facilities will come from the proposed General Obligation Bond funds. However, these funds could be utilized as leverage with other funding sources to provide additional facilities or operational funding.

### C. City of Norman Efforts to Address Homelessness

Homelessness in Norman and the greater Cleveland County is managed through the Norman/Cleveland County Continuum of Care (CoC) ; OK-504, which is coordinated through the City’s Planning Department. This group includes over 40 different non-profits, faith based, and governmental entities working in Norman and Cleveland County.

Norman is an entitlement community for the receipt of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds as administered by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. The City of Norman completed its new 2020 to 2024 Consolidated Plan in May of 2020. Norman also has its own independent Housing Authority that directly manages 166 residential public housing units across five developments as well as the Housing Choice Voucher Program. Norman’s 2020 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice study indicates that there are over 1,290 residential units in publicly assisted housing projects in the city. The City has also adopted a Housing First philosophy over the past five years and has been very successful in utilizing the available limited affordable housing. Funding for new affordable housing, however, remains limited

City Planning staff and the members of the CoC conduct an annual Point in Time Count each January to establish the approximate size of the community’s homeless population and to track any changes in the demographic makeup of it.

#### Norman Point In Time Totals Fiscal Years 2017 to 2020

YEAR	Shelter	Transitional Housing	Unsheltered	Total
FY2017	79	19	76	174
FY2018	76	61	227	364
FY2019	75	57	215	347
FY2020	69	51	146	266

Some of the main findings of these recent Point In Time Counts include:

- The increase seen in 2018 and 2019 is attributed to increased efforts by CoC members and the Norman Police Department to identify, count, and engage with local homeless encampments.
- The significant increase in individuals observed in transitional housing from 2017 to 2018 was caused by the opening of 30 new cottages by local non-profit Food and Shelter.
- The decrease in unsheltered individuals from 2019 to 2020 is largely due to targeted housing-focused strategies implemented through a temporary winter shelter managed by the City of Norman (further discussed below).

During the past winter, City staff members opened an overnight warming shelter. Previously this seasonal shelter was operated by a non-profit who elected not to undertake the shelter. Conversations are ongoing about how the same concept may be implemented for the upcoming winter. The shelter’s opening marked the first time that the City of Norman has acted as direct provider of services and it remains to be seen if this arrangement is the most efficient and sustainable solution moving forward.

The shelter was open for 13 weeks – from December 6 to February 29, 2019 - and ultimately served 204 unique individuals. The nightly maximum occupancy is 40 for the men’s side and 11 for the women’s side. The costs to run the shelter have been summarized and will be made available to the selected consultant team.

The City and its CoC partners currently practice a coordinated entry and case management system that allows clients to be added at several sites across the community. This coordinated approach is aided by the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) database that first came into use in Oklahoma City in 2001. The HMIS database and its shared data have since grown across the entire state to include efforts to combat homelessness within all seven Continuum's of Care. The database is managed through WellSky's ServicePoint software and now includes licenses for all seven CoCs in the state of Oklahoma.

In 2015, the Norman/Cleveland County CoC adopted the goal of eliminating veteran homelessness and was recognized by the federal government in February 2018 as the first community in Oklahoma to achieve this goal. Norman is also the longtime home of the State of Oklahoma's largest mental health facility, Griffin Memorial Hospital. Anecdotal evidence from the community's service providers indicates that a portion of those requesting service are arriving after being discharged from the Griffin facility and therefore did not likely have a residential history in Norman prior to their hospitalization.

#### **D. Relevant Documents**

The following documents can elaborate on many of the items discussed in the preceding sections and have been made available here: <https://www.normanok.gov/your-government/departments/planning-and-community-development/grant-programs/homeless-plan-rfp>

- City of Norman Consolidated Plan 2020 – 2024, First Year Action Plan 2020
- PDF of Point-in-Time Count Powerpoint
- Preliminary Draft of Current (2020) Analysis of Impediment (AI) to Affordable Housing
- Preliminary Assessment of the Norman/Cleveland County Homeless Response System

## **II. Project Specific Information**

### **A. Scope of Work**

#### ***Task 1: Comprehensive review of existing service provision***

The selected consultant team will gather information and data from consumers, human services, veteran services, housing, law enforcement, employment, community development, health, mental health, welfare, non-profit organizations, CoC recipients, City Departments and other relevant public and private entities, including foundations and other organizations that provide financial assistance to address homelessness issues. These conversations should also include potential operators of any new facilities recommended in Task 2.

City staff will make available to the Consultant Team all relevant documents related to existing relationships with these organizations and the overall provision of housing and services to those experiencing homelessness in Norman. This review will also specifically include relevant data from the City's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), recent Point In Time Counts, and the City's recent experience in managing a temporary overnight shelter.

The primary goal of this Task is to gain an understanding of existing gaps and possible duplications of service in the overall social safety net, as well as the respective growth goals for these entities relative to the community's desire to develop a comprehensive response to homelessness. The information collected in this Task should also be compared to a limited number of peer communities and overall national best practices.

***Task 2: Recommended Built Solution(s)***

Initial interest in this study dates back several years, but the City Council's recent decision to seek \$5 million towards built solutions to address homelessness through an August 25, 2020 public vote and the City's recent experience over the winter of 2019-2020 in operating an emergency overnight shelter have brought the need for the study to the forefront. While it is generally accepted that Norman needs one or more facilities to better address homelessness, opinions differ on which built solution – ranging from additional housing units to an overnight shelter to a day shelter/resource center – would provide the community the best return on investment.

In the region's primary city, Oklahoma City, community leaders have spent the past two decades organizing the Homeless Alliance to act as an umbrella organization capable of better coordinating service provision across the many homelessness-related non-profits. The Homeless Alliance completed its day shelter and resource center in 2011. Many community leaders across the region are now familiar with this facility and the organization's overall approach and thus, may envision a similar facility for Norman. Given the shared clientele of the various organizations, City of Norman staff members and other CoC members remain in ongoing communications and track clients within the same Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) as Oklahoma City's Homeless Alliance, but the organization does not currently have a formal role in Norman.

***Task 2.1: Program recommendation for built solution(s)***

As part of this overall recommendation, the City is seeking detailed advice on how best to operate the proposed facility or facilities in terms of:

- Overall capacity in terms of maximum/expected number of clients
- Hours and days of operation
- Additional service providers that could be co-located

***Task 2.2: Preferred location for recommended built solution(s)***

The City is also seeking assistance in identifying the preferred location for the recommended built solution(s). It is expected that this task would include:

- A discussion of those factors that should be considered in locating the various facility types
- Identification of multiple suitable sites (in conversation with City Planning staff members)
- A ranking of those sites based on the previously mentioned factors

***Task 2.3: Preliminary construction cost estimate for recommend built solution(s)***

The City of Norman is seeking preliminary evidence on how the built solution(s) recommended in Task 2.1 fit within the \$5 million budget being sought through the August 25th bond initiative. If more than one solution is ultimately recommended, but cannot be accomplished with the initial budget, additional analysis should explore other possible funding sources the City should consider in the future. Additionally, the City is seeking recommendations on how the initial \$5 million could be used as seed money to gain other funding sources.

***Task 2.4: Recommended long-term funding and operator solutions***

Any new facilities resulting from this study will require ongoing operation and maintenance funding that would be new to the City's existing budget. As a part of this study, the City of Norman is seeking

recommendations based on peer study research on where these funds could originate, whether that be through cost savings identified in Task 2 of this study or through the institution of new development related fees. Secondly, the City is seeking recommendations on potential operators of the built solution(s), whether that be specific organizations already operating in the community or general characteristics that should be considered in the future search for the operator.

***Task 3: Development of Strategies, Initiatives, and Benchmarks***

The work outlined in the two previous tasks should ultimately fold into a larger set of recommended strategies, initiatives, and benchmarks capable of guiding the City and the CoC over the next five to ten years. While the City of Norman does currently practice some data tracking and benchmarking related to various reporting requirements, it would benefit from a more thorough analysis of its current practices. This work should be done in relation to national best practices and the benchmarks should be aligned to any strategies and initiatives identified in this plan.

***Task 4: Creation of Final Strategy Report***

To conclude the project, the Consultant Team will produce a draft strategy report summarizing their findings and recommendations from the previous tasks. This document should outline a clear and comprehensive approach that includes, at a minimum:

1. An executive summary
2. A summary of background and existing conditions
3. A comparison of Norman's and Cleveland County's efforts compared to relevant peer communities and overall national best practices
4. Recommended built solution(s) with program recommendations, identification of preferred site(s), and those factors that should be prioritized in their siting
5. Strategies, initiatives, and benchmarks to guide future decision making

**B. Stakeholder Engagement**

The Consultant Team will be expected to conduct direct outreach to all Continuum of Care (CoC) members through individual or group interviews. At least one meeting with the full CoC membership is expected. The City of Norman is requesting a minimum of three stakeholder groups: (1) service providers, (2) clients that are currently or have recently experienced homelessness, and (3) a group to be determined later.

**C. Project Funding**

The City of Norman has set aside funding in the amount of \$100,000 within the FY 2020 Budget (which began on July 1, 2020) for the completion of the work described in the Request for Proposal.

**III. Selection Process**

The City of Norman will review responses to this RFP that meet the requirements enumerated and are received prior to the designated closing date. Upon review of the response to this RFP, City staff will prepare a short list of consultants to interview. Interviews are tentatively scheduled to occur in late **October 2020**.

Following the interviews, a firm will be selected for recommendation to the City Council for the purpose of negotiating contract terms, including a fair and reasonable price. Additional copies of the response to this RFP may be required for presentation to the City Council. If a satisfactory contract cannot be negotiated with that firm, the City shall formally end negotiations with that firm and select the next most favored provider and attempt to negotiate with that firm.

### A. Evaluation of Qualifications

The criteria for evaluating the qualifications and selecting a consultant will focus on:

- **Project Approach** – Although the City has identified the general nature of services required, the consultant is encouraged to provide an innovative approach and methodology to provide the requested services.
- **Project Team (Experience of key personnel)** – Proposer must show the qualifications of individuals who will have direct involvement in tasks on this project. The City is seeking detail on the previous experience of individual team members that have worked on similar projects as evidence of their specialized knowledge and technical competence. Relevant experience and capability of key personnel and sub-contractors will be evaluated closely. Please provide name, position and details of experience and capability for each member of your team.
- **Company/Agency Capacity and Capability** – Proposer must show through past project experience and client references their ability to accomplish a project of this scope and that their firm/agency has the current capacity to prioritize the completion of this project. The City is seeking a past record of performance on contracts with other governmental agencies, including such factors as quality of work, control of costs, and ability to meet established schedules.
- **Project Schedule** – Proposer must fully demonstrate their ability to accomplish the full scope of work within 9 to 12 months.

Illustrative and narrative material describing previous work of the proposer is recommended. The proposer shall provide a list of previous related work experience with contact persons, phone numbers, and email addresses.

The City reserves the right to request additional information from consultants submitting qualifications. The City reserves the right to reject any or all qualifications and the right, in its sole discretion, to accept the qualifications it considers most favorable to the City's interest. The City further reserves the right to reject all qualifications and seek new qualifications when such procedure is deemed reasonable and in its best interest.

### B. Ranking Criteria

Proposals will be scored by the City of Norman using the following breakdown of points:

	Points Per Criterion
Project Approach including Engagement Strategy	40
Project Team (Experience of key personnel)	40
Company/Agency Capacity and Capability	15
Project Schedule	5
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TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE	100

#### IV. Proposal/Submittal Instructions

##### A. Submission Timeline

The final schedule for adoption will be determined during the negotiation of the professional services agreement, but the schedule for proposal submittal is as follows:

RFP Released	August 19, 2020
Questions Due to the City	August 31, 2020
Deadline to Request Attendance at Pre-proposal Conference	
Pre-proposal Conference	September 2, 2020
Proposals Due to the City	September 25, 2020
Proposal Evaluation, Shortlist Notification, and Interviews	October 2020
Contract Negotiations and Contract Award by City Council	November 2020

Following acceptance of the contract at Council and the formal notice to proceed being issued to the selected consultant team, the City of Norman is requesting that the final deliverable of the strategy document be completed within a 9 to 12-month timeline.

##### B. Inquiries/Questions

Respondents should submit questions and/or clarifications to the City of Norman at [Homeless.Strategy@NormanOK.gov](mailto:Homeless.Strategy@NormanOK.gov) no later than **12:00 p.m. CDT on Friday, August 28, 2020**. Questions must include the proposer's name, telephone number, email address, and name of the organization(s) being represented. All questions received by the deadline will be answered during the Pre-Proposal Conference.

##### C. Pre-Proposal Conference

There will be a pre-proposal virtual conference held at 10:00 AM CDT on **Wednesday, September 2, 2020** via Zoom. Proposers will have the opportunity to ask questions related to the information contained within this solicitation. While not mandatory, proposers are encouraged to attend. Those seeking to attend the pre-proposal virtual conference should notify the City by email at [Homeless.Strategy@NormanOK.gov](mailto:Homeless.Strategy@NormanOK.gov) before **4:00 p.m. CDT on Friday, August 28, 2020** in order to receive the link to join the Zoom event.

##### D. Proposal Submission

Proposals shall be accepted electronically until **4:00 p.m. CDT on Friday, September 25, 2020**. Proposals should be emailed to [Homeless.Strategy@NormanOK.gov](mailto:Homeless.Strategy@NormanOK.gov).



### **E. Minimum Content of Proposal**

At a minimum the proposal should contain the following elements:

1. Transmittal Letter
2. Table of Contents
3. Executive Summary
4. Project Approach
5. Experience of Project Team with same or similar Planning Experience
6. Project Schedule
7. Appendices (misc., exhibits, illustrations, etc.)
8. Proof of Insurance
9. References

### **F. General Requirements**

Firms without adequate insurance, in minimum amounts set forth herein, to protect the City's interest will not be considered. A response to this RFP should not be deemed to be construed as a contract or an indication of a commitment of any kind on the part of the City of Norman.

Consultants may contract with sub-consultants, but a lead consultant must be identified and must take responsibility of all the deliverables. The City reserves the right to request substitution of firms.

The City of Norman retains the right to reject any or all proposals and to re-solicit if deemed to be in the best interest of the City of Norman.

All proposals must state their validity for a period of not less than 60 days from the date of receipt.

### **G. Authorized Signatures**

When submitting proposals, corporate entities are required to comply with Oklahoma State law regarding authorized signatures.

The City of Norman requires that a proposal be signed by a duly authorized corporate official with authority to bind the interested party by the proposal as stated in Oklahoma State statute, "...signed by the chair or vice chair of the Board of Directors, or the President, or by a Vice President, and attested by the Secretary or an Assistant Secretary; or by officers as may be duly authorized to exercise the duties..." 18 O.S. § 22

However, should some other official with the corporation sign, such as a secretary signing a document, such signature needs to be accompanied by a certificate or a copy of a resolution adopted by the Board setting forth the authority of that individual to execute a contract.

With respect to limited liability corporations, every manager is an agent of the company for the purpose of business and binds the limited liability company. Therefore, instruments and documents shall be valid and binding upon the limited liability company if executed by one or more of its managers. 18 O.S. § 32

As set forth above, when submitting proposals, certification adhering to the state statutes should accompany documents being submitted for consideration.



**H. Prohibited Interest**

No member, officer, employee of the City of Norman, or member of its governing body during his or her tenure, or one (1) year thereafter, shall have any interest, direct or indirect, in any resultant contract or the proceeds thereof.

**I. Equal Employment Opportunities**

In connection with this proposal, the consultant shall not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, physical or mental disability, income or status as a war veteran.

The consultant shall furnish all necessary information and reports and shall permit access to its books, records, and accounts by the City of Norman for purposes of investigation to ascertain compliance with the non-discrimination/minority business provision of any resultant contract.

**J. Insurance Requirements**

The consultant of this project must provide an insurance policy or policies, naming the City of Norman as an additional insured in the amount of at least \$1 million dollars. Said policy, or policies, shall provide general liability insurance and automobile insurance. In addition, workers compensation insurance must also be provided in the amount required by law.