

## **Home Advocate RFP Outline**

*City of Dubuque, Iowa Request for Proposals for Home Advocate Services in conjunction with the HUD Natural Disaster Resiliency Competition Award.*

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has awarded the City of Dubuque \$31.5 million to assist Bee Branch Watershed homeowners in repairing and “flood-proofing” their homes and for stormwater infrastructure improvements.

The City of Dubuque partnered with the State of Iowa to apply for federal funds through the final phase of the National Disaster Resilience Competition (NDRC). This nearly \$1 billion competition invited communities that have experienced natural disasters in 2011, 2012, or 2013 to compete for funds to help them rebuild and increase their resilience to future disasters.

HUD awarded \$96.9 million in National Disaster Resilience Competition funds to Iowa through the competition. Dubuque was part of the Iowa Economic Development Authority’s application, which outlined the “Iowa Watershed Approach” (IWA), a watershed-scale program based on a holistic approach recognizing that: 1) heavy precipitation and flooding events are increasing in frequency; 2) upstream activities impact downstream communities; 3) upstream and downstream communities need to voluntarily work together; 4) when possible, flooding should be addressed at its source, using science-based, reasonable, cost-effective practices; 5) improving community resilience to floods requires risk mitigation and community-directed initiatives and planning; and 6) program strategies must also respect, protect, and sustain Iowa’s valuable agricultural economy, which provides food, fuel, and fiber for the world and sustains family incomes for many Iowans.

The Iowa Watershed Approach has six specific goals: 1) reduce flood risk; 2) improve water quality; 3) increase resilience; 4) engage stakeholders through collaboration and outreach/education; 5) improve quality of life and health, especially for vulnerable populations; and 6) develop a program that is scalable and replicable throughout the Midwest and the United States.

Dubuque’s portion of the application highlighted the need to address remaining impacts from the flooding experienced in downtown Dubuque and continuing vulnerabilities to future flooding.

The grant funds will help with home maintenance and renovations to decrease environmental health and safety issues from flooding such as dampness and mold growth, electrical hazards, and structural issues. A comprehensive “Bee Branch Healthy

Homes Resiliency Program” was outlined to help Dubuque residents meet unmet structural needs and empower individuals to be part of the creation of more resilient housing through onsite stormwater management principles and sustainable, healthy homes behaviors.

More specifically, Dubuque’s portion of the application detailed the following components:

- **Single & Multi-Unit, Rental and Owner-Occupied Residential Rehabilitations:** The proposed program includes \$8.4 million for the rehabilitation of 320 housing units, including owner-occupied homes, single-unit rentals, and small, multi-family residential units, all within the targeted Bee Branch Watershed areas. The program’s rehabilitation projects are expected to generate significant work for local contractors and vendors. The City’s contribution to this component of the project will be \$800,000 in already budgeted Lead and Healthy Homes Program funds.
- **Bee Branch Railroad Culvert Infrastructure Improvements:** The proposed improvements total \$9 million and involve the installation of six 8-foot diameter culverts to convey stormwater from the Upper Bee Branch Creek (currently under construction) through Canadian Pacific railroad right-of-way to the Lower Bee Branch Creek. The total cost for this component of the Bee Branch Project is estimated at \$18 million, with the remaining funds already in the City budget.
- **West Locust Street Storm Sewer Improvements:** These improvements total \$2.6 million and will increase the capacity of the West Locust Street corridor stormwater management system by constructing a storm sewer from 17th Street toward Rosedale Avenue.
- **Kaufmann Avenue Storm Sewer Improvements:** These improvements total \$11.5 million and will increase capacity of the stormwater management system in this area (from Central Avenue to Kane Street) by constructing a storm sewer with 80 stormwater drains.

### **HOME ADVOCACY SERVICES RELATED TO THE HEALTHY HOMES SINGLE & MULTI-UNITY, RENTAL, AND OWNER-OCCUPIED RESIDENTIAL REHABILITATIONS**

Each housing unit will be inspected by a Resiliency Inspector to identify the seven principles of a healthy home (dry, clean, pest-free, safe, contaminant-free, ventilated, and maintained), and resiliency work will be completed to address: foundation repairs, foundation raising or shifting to accommodate water levels, water and sewage services, furnace replacement, basement windows, mold and mildew remediation, lead

remediation, water heater replacement, soil modification, lateral connection repairs, asbestos, sidewalk and curb cuts, sump pumps, and downspouts.

Home Advocacy Services will address individual homeowners' needs by providing education, awareness, tools, and resources needed to live in an urban watershed. Services to assess general resilience needs and challenges faced by residents and businesses in the Bee Branch Watershed and one-on-one interaction with residents to complete a comprehensive assessment at the household level will be offered and conducted at each home. Assistance with education and referrals to increase understanding of what it means to live in a watershed, and what resources and services are available to support development, employment, education, health, and neighborhood revitalization will be part of the Home Advocacy Services portfolio. A variety of community resources will be used to improve housing, repair damages, and make homes more resilient to future flooding, all while empowering the residents to maintain their homes in a resilient manner.

Clear and compelling evidence shows that unsafe, unhealthy housing leads to wealth depletion, abandoned properties, housing instability, potential homelessness, and increased risk of housing-based illnesses. Evidence also shows that healthy and safe housing in the most distressed and impacted communities improves health, social, and economic outcomes for families -ultimately creating safer neighborhoods and healthy communities. This service will strive to inform, motivate, empower, and educate residents, homeowners, and businesses on how to break the links among unhealthy housing, unhealthy families, and unhealthy neighborhoods. Informed and engaged residents create a resilient community.

### **SPECIFIC SERVICES & OUTCOMES DESIRED**

Collaboration with the City of Dubuque Housing and Community Development Department as well as Operation: New View Community Action Agency, and the Green & Healthy Homes Initiative (GHHI) Team (including the Lead and Healthy Homes Program staff), as well as other community-based organizations, to holistically address unhealthy homes both physically and socially. Individual/family case management and community organizing is essential.

#### *Requirements*

Home Advocacy Services must be provided utilizing critical thinking and creative problem-solving, along with excellent oral, written, interpersonal and social service skills, with a mature, credible, and motivating presence.

#### *Education/Experience*

- Staff with Bachelor's degree in a field related to social work and/or health
- Experience working with people in poverty

- Proficiency in Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Outlook
- Proven ability to have a caseload of 10-25 clients at one time and be responsible for other tasks simultaneously
- Experience in community organizing
- Flexible and collegial disposition and ability to work effectively with people with a range of backgrounds, experiences, and cultures

### *Specific Services to be Provided*

#### Green & Healthy Homes Team Participation

Works closely with the Lead and Healthy Homes Team as well as community GHHI partners in every home, devising a plan on how to make each home green and healthy.

- Accompany assessors during assessment to complete family intake
- Attend meetings with City staff and GHHI Resource Group to discuss status of homes/client
- Advocate on an individual and policy level when the client is being treated unjustly
- Continually suggest ways to improve process and partnerships
- Facilitate a client-centered approach

#### Case Management

- Responsible for knowing community resources
- Connect clients with appropriate resources and services
- Empower clients to gain knowledge about healthy homes maintenance practices
- Track homes to assure they are going through the GHHI process in a timely manner
- Coordinate and communicate with medical case managers
- Provide ongoing evaluation of home repairs and interventions in order to evaluate outcomes

#### Community Organization

- Continually create partnerships with different community organizations that will benefit clients
- Coordinate workshops and learning methods that address financial literacy, emotional health, physical health, and environmental health
- Provide information about the Home Advocate service to funders, community-based organizations, and community and national leaders

#### Volunteer Coordination

- Recruit and coordinate volunteers from various entities such as colleges, AmeriCorps, churches, etc. to assist clients and provide community education and outreach
- Coordinate volunteer opportunities

Personal Growth and Development

- Committed to continued professional growth and development
- Understand the culture of poverty
- Attend training classes by partnering organizations (e.g., Healthy Homes, Lead Hazard Control Program, etc.)
- Partner with and educate local social work professionals and health care workers about the City NDRC projects

*Requirements for Proposal*

Proposals for Home Advocacy Services should include:

1. Capacity of the organization and staff qualifications
2. A brief description of the applicant’s Scope of Services and ability to provide Home Advocacy Services as described in the “Specific Services and Outcomes” section.
3. Cost of providing services by year, for a total of five years.

**Proposals are due by \_\_\_ PM Central Time on \_\_\_\_\_.** Any submittals received after the due date and time will be disqualified. To be considered a qualified vendor for this project, the following must be included in the submitted proposal summary:

- Cover letter serving as an executive summary of your firm and intent to submit your firm’s qualifications and understanding of what the City of Dubuque is requesting as a part of this document;
- Firm profile including a description of the firm, number of professional personnel, years in business, office location(s), organizational structure (i.e., corporation, partnership, sole practitioner, etc.), and your areas of expertise;
- Key personnel who will be involved in this project, including manager and staff, and their experience in similar services;
- Description of capabilities, knowledge, experience, and methods to provide the Home Advocate Services described in this RFP.

*Project Timeline*

<b>Event</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Issue request for Proposals (RFP)</b>	_____
<b>Questions related to RFQ to be</b>	Begin _____

<b>received by NDRC Team</b>	End _____
<b>Supplementary information provided to interested vendors regarding clarifications/questions to RFQ</b>	Begin _____ End _____
<b>Presentations by vendors (if deemed necessary by selection committee)</b>	_____
<b>Recommendation of selected vendor to City Council</b>	_____

*Additional Information*

Proposers shall submit a written proposal that describe the qualifications and understanding of the work to be performed. Cost proposals are to be submitted on a separate document, included with the submission. Your proposal should provide all the information considered pertinent to your qualifications for this service. For ease of our evaluation, please respond to or provide information on specific services and outcomes desired.

Questions and Inquiries

All questions and inquiries regarding this RFP must be submitted in writing. Please submit all inquiries to \_\_\_\_\_. Inquiries and questions will be answered and posted on \_\_\_\_\_. Please visit this page and sign up for “Notify Me,” which will send you an email or text every time new information is added to this page. As identified above, questions and inquiries will be received through \_\_\_\_\_. It is the responsibility of the vendor to watch this page for updated and supplementary information.

Vendor Presentation

One or more of the submitting professional firms, may be requested by the City of Dubuque for an interview.

Exceptions

Any exceptions related to any part of the requirements listed above must be clearly identified as exceptions in the submitted proposal.

Confidentiality of Information

Any submitted information considered a trade secret or confidential to the vendor or its subsidiaries, or rendered via a non-disclosure agreement with the City, must be labeled as such.

The vendor, City of Dubuque and their agents will hold the submitted proposals and any related materials in confidence if so requested by the vendor. Throughout the evaluation process any information therein will not be made available to any other parties unless precluded by Iowa State Code. No debriefings or scoring sheets will be released before final recommendation.

Upon award of contract, all contents of the selected qualifications will be considered public information.

All proposal material supplied, including supporting material and information disclosed during the evaluation process, will become property of the City of Dubuque and will be retained for internal use. The City of Dubuque reserves the right to retain all proposals submitted and use any ideas in a proposal regardless of whether that submitting vendor was selected. Submission of a proposal indicates acceptance by the vendor of the conditions contained in this request for proposal, unless clearly and specifically noted in the submitted proposal and confirmed in the contract between the City of Dubuque and the selected vendor.

#### Incurring Costs

The City of Dubuque is not liable for any costs incurred with replying to this request for proposals.

#### Caution to Vendors

The City of Dubuque is not responsible for locating or securing any information which has not been identified in the request for proposals and reasonably available to the City of Dubuque. Vendors are encouraged to ask questions to clarify items in this request for proposals that may need clarification.

#### Project Award

Upon selection of the desired qualifications for this project, the City will enter into negotiations for cost and contracted services. Initial contract documents shall be developed by the successful vendor and partnering with the City of Dubuque, a process will be developed to ensure a successful contract favoring both parties is reached. This contract will then be submitted to the City Manager and subsequently, the Dubuque City Council, for approval. This approval must be obtained prior to any work beginning.