



## **Request for Proposals: Lincoln Affordable Housing Coordinated Action Plan**

Lincoln, Nebraska is a growing City of over 285,000, up over 10 percent from 2010. The City has enjoyed a steady annual growth rate of over one percent for the past 30 years.

Lincoln is located on Interstate 80, midway between Denver and Chicago, and is part of the Silicon Prairie due to its rapidly growing tech industry, connections to top ranked colleges and the University of Nebraska Lincoln, and supportive entrepreneurial spirit.

Lincoln has a number of assets: a diversified economic base, excellent school system with high graduation rates, safe neighborhoods, a burgeoning startup community, and access to a number of different higher education opportunities. Lincoln routinely earns national rankings in “best of” categories including happiest place, starting a business, job markets, raising a family and overall quality of life.

Within this context and compared to other cities, Lincoln’s housing is still relatively affordable; however, as we continue to grow, maintaining and increasing the supply of quality affordable housing has become a greater issue. The City has public, private and non-profit partners already working on affordable housing. We are now proactively seeking to develop a plan of action to ensure coordinated efforts and structures are in place to continue providing quality affordable housing to Lincoln’s residents.

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS  
FOR  
PROFESSIONAL CONSULTING SERVICES**

**CITY OF LINCOLN, NEBRASKA – LINCOLN AFFORDABLE HOUSING COORDINATED  
ACTION PLAN**

**1. Project Schedule**

All firms submitting proposals shall be prepared to initiate work on this project upon receipt of "Notice to Proceed". The below schedule is provided as a guide to ensure responding Consultants have staff available to complete the necessary services required. A more detailed schedule of the professional services will be required of the selected Consultant, once negotiations have been concluded.

<b>Schedule of Activities</b>	<b>Anticipated Date</b>
Question Submittal Deadline	April 19, 2019
Proposal Submittal Deadline	April 26, 2019
Potential Interviews (if needed)	Week of April 29, 2019
Final Selection	May 3, 2019
Scoping Meeting with Selected Consultant	May 10, 2019
Notice to Proceed	May 17, 2019
Completed Project	December 6, 2019

**2. Protocol**

- 2.1 Proposals must be to the Lincoln Urban Development Department no later than April 26, 2019 by 12:00pm. No exceptions to this deadline will be given.
- 2.2 Please provide five (5) paper copies and 1 USB Drive or CD/DVD (PDF format) of your proposal in an envelope clearly marked on the exterior as containing "Proposal for Professional Services for Lincoln Affordable Housing Coordinated Action Plan – Lincoln, NE";
- Lincoln Urban Development Department  
Attn: Wynn Hjermstad, AICP  
555 South 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 205  
Lincoln, NE 68508
- 2.3 Proposals must remain firm for sixty (60) days from the proposal due date.
- 2.4 The City of Lincoln reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals and to waive technicalities in order to accept proposals that may be in the best interest of the City of Lincoln, at its sole discretion. The City of Lincoln also reserves the right to accomplish services for future phases of this project with the selected consultant, select another consultant, or utilize its own forces.
- 2.5 The City of Lincoln will select a consultant based on the submitted proposals. Interviews may be conducted at the discretion of the City.
- 2.6 The City of Lincoln will contact the selected Consultant by phone after reviewing proposals and ranking the Consultants.
- 2.7 At the City of Lincoln's discretion and based on performance within this contract, the selected Consultant may be issued additional task orders in the form of additional scope of work beyond the schedule outlined in this Request for Proposals.
- 2.8 Firms may present a particular situation to the City of Lincoln in advance of their proposal, if they are unsure whether they have a real or potential conflict of interest. Firms should notify all conflict of interest inquiries to Wynn Hjermstad, 402-441-8211 or whjermstad@lincoln.ne.gov.

2.9 Any questions regarding the contents of the proposal shall be directed to Wynn Hjermstad, Community Development Manager, at: whjermstad@lincoln.ne.gov or call (402) 441-8211. The City of Lincoln reserves the right to share responses to RFP questions with all other consultants who have expressed interest in this project.

### **3. Submittal**

In order to facilitate review of the project proposals by the Consultant Selection Committee, the following information must be included in the proposal: a one-page letter of interest and a maximum of twenty (20) pages including qualifications and experience, proposed approach to the project, the team that will work on the project, a fee proposal for services covered in the project, and anything else the Consultant would like to include for consideration.

### **4. Selection Criteria**

Proposals will be reviewed, evaluated, and ranked by the Consultant Selection Committee. The Selection Criteria will include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Professional qualifications including specialized experience and technical competence
- Sufficient professional staff to meet project schedule
- Reputation for, and examples of, quality project efforts and pertinent studies
- Project management
- Understanding of the project and approach to the project
- Past performance on similar projects
- Interview results (if needed)

Prior experience with research, discussion, development, and implementation of affordable housing policies and programs at the local level is highly desired.

See attachment – Exhibit “A”

Exhibit "A"  
Basic Scope of Services  
Lincoln Affordable Housing Coordinated Action Plan  
For the City of Lincoln, NE

**1. PROJECT SCOPE**

The City of Lincoln, NE seeks a qualified consultant team with national experience with the topic of housing affordability to support City staff with the development of the Lincoln Affordable Housing Coordinated Action Plan. The selected consultant team will meet with the City of Lincoln to develop a detailed scope of services for the project based on the Scope of Work as described. The City will provide a background report entitled "Housing Needs Assessment for Low- and Moderate-Income Households." This report is a compilation of analysis completed and included in the City's "Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing" and "Five-Year Strategic Plan for HUD Entitlement Programs FY 2018-2023." A considerable amount of data analysis was completed for both reports and can be provided as identified and requested by the consultant team.

**2. PROJECT BACKGROUND**

The Lincoln-Lancaster County Comprehensive Plan includes several points of emphasis about the importance of providing the community safe and affordable housing. The following are specific mentions of affordable housing in the Comprehensive Plan that provide a guiding basis for this effort:

- Ensuring safe, adequate, and affordable housing is an important function in maintaining the vitality of neighborhoods and the city as a whole.
- Distribute and preserve affordable housing throughout the community to be near job opportunities and to provide housing choices within existing and developing neighborhoods.
- Preserve areas designated for multi-family and special needs housing in approved plans to support a distributed choice in affordable housing.
- Provide safe and decent affordable and special needs housing for low- and moderate-income households.
- Preserving our existing housing stock is one of the best ways to provide for affordable housing in our community. Over the last few years the City has been working on improvements to housing code enforcement. These efforts include an increase in fines for violations of property maintenance code and adoption of the "international" property maintenance code which is more comprehensive and stricter than the previous code. The Building and Safety Department has begun to institute more "performance-based" inspections of multifamily rental units. Performance-based inspections allow a property owner who has a good inspection to have inspections every two years, while property owners with poor inspections are inspected every six months. These are big steps to improving quality affordable housing, but there may be other strategies that should be explored.
- Encourage public/private partnerships with housing entities such as Lincoln Housing Authority, Affordable Housing Initiatives, Habitat for Humanity, and NeighborWorks Lincoln.
- Provide for more education of the public about affordable housing and code enforcement.

- Recognize that broad economic diversity within existing neighborhoods encourages reinvestment and improves quality of life for all residents while acknowledging the need for affordable housing.
- Implement the housing and neighborhood strategies as embodied in the City of Lincoln Consolidated and Annual Action Plans and subsequent housing and neighborhood plans. These plans provide the core for affordable housing and neighborhood preservation actions for public and private agencies.

In addition, several current efforts and processes are underway and should be considered in the project, including:

- The City and the South of Downtown Community Development Organization are partnering on efforts to enhance the South of Downtown area while addressing neighborhood concerns and issues. An Affordable Housing Subcommittee is identifying strategies to increase and maintain quality affordable housing and anticipate a final report in May 2019.
- The City's Livable Neighborhoods initiative is a commitment to improving and maintaining strong, vibrant neighborhoods. This multi-departmental effort is focusing on the South of Downtown area and is identifying projects for completion beginning this year.
- Efforts are underway to develop Nebraska's first Community Land Trust in Lincoln.
- The City has been assisting the Lincoln Housing Authority develop additional new affordable units in the center of Lincoln and in new edge neighborhoods.
- To improve quality, the City and neighborhood leaders are working to identify more conditions that will trigger additional housing inspections for problem properties.
- The City has identified and dedicated additional fiscal resources from tax increment financing and turnback tax funds to go toward or with affordable housing initiatives.
- Efforts of the Haymarket affordable housing group, Lincoln Haymarket Development Corporation

### **3. ANTICIPATED WORK TASKS**

The overall purpose of this project is to develop an action plan that identifies and then applies the most effective strategies that address Lincoln's housing affordability needs with particular emphasis on quality affordable housing for renters at the 30%-80% AMI threshold. This project will also conduct a comprehensive review of Lincoln's affordable housing data contained in the Housing Needs Assessment for Low- and Moderate-Income Households report (provided to selected consultant team), current housing affordability efforts and policies in Lincoln, and identify and conduct additional data analysis as needed.

**Task 1. Project Management** - The Consultant shall be responsible for the management of the project including attendance and coordination of project progress/review meetings, scheduling updates, budget, tasks, and ensuring the project's successful and timely completion, and submittal of invoices and relevant meeting agendas and minutes. In addition, preparation of materials and attendance at meetings with City staff, local stakeholders, and elected and appointed officials will be included with these professional services. On-going coordination meetings/phone calls with the City are anticipated and are included as part of this scope. The Project Management task also includes the Quality Assurance/Quality Control reviews conducted as part of the project tasks.

**Task 2. Discovery and Analysis** – Consultant shall be responsible for the review and analysis of pertinent existing data from the Housing Needs Assessment for Low- and Moderate-Income

Households report and identification and review of additional data as needed. Analysis of the effectiveness and applicability of current housing affordability efforts and policies in Lincoln shall also be the responsibility of the consultant under this task.

**Task 3. Develop Lincoln Affordable Housing Coordinated Action Plan** – The Action Plan shall provide a range of information needed to understand the housing affordability topic in Lincoln including:

- a. Consider the entire spectrum of housing costs; also include a particular focus on quality affordable housing for renters at the 30%-80% AMI threshold
- b. Address how the existing and new housing stock play roles in meeting the needs of housing affordability
- c. Define housing affordability for Lincoln and identify different price points based on household income
- d. Consider how the Livable Neighborhoods concept that uses coordinated public infrastructure investment to help stabilize neighborhoods impacts housing affordability
- e. Address both rental and home ownership models in the strategy and policy implementation
- f. Consider how past and current development patterns impact housing costs
- g. Identify roles for stakeholders including the City, private sector, community action groups, and philanthropic agencies to help support and implement the findings of the Action Plan
- h. Identify Champions for implementation items of the Action Plan including a complete list of potential partners, funders, and stakeholders to best accomplish the strategies identified
- i. Frame the action plan in context of a long-term vision that includes short and long-term goals; goals should identify metrics that can measure the success of implemented efforts from the action plan
- j. Provide an explanation of funding options and opportunities including known opportunities like TIF administration funds and turn-back tax funding as well as other options that may need further development
- k. Identify the most pertinent and effective strategies for Lincoln resulting from the data analysis review, consultant findings, and understanding gained from stakeholder outreach and including a prioritization of work efforts for implementation efforts; identified strategies should include cost estimates and potential funding sources for implementation
- l. Identify long and short term strategies including but not limited to:
  - i. Code enforcement's role in maintaining safe and affordable housing
  - ii. Public education efforts
  - iii. Inclusionary zoning and other local regulatory options
  - iv. State legislative opportunities
- m. Discuss the desirability of locating affordable housing units broadly across the city's neighborhoods and analyze whether Lincoln's current geographic distribution of units is adequate.

**Task 4. Project Coordination with Local Staff** – The Lincoln Urban Development Department is the lead agency for the project and the effort is co-chaired by David Cary, Director, Lincoln Lancaster County Planning Department and Wynn Hjermsstad, Community Development Manager, Urban Development Department.

- a. A City Resource Team will serve as a staff resource committee with representation from:
  - a. Planning Department
  - b. Urban Development Department
  - c. Building & Safety Department
  - d. Health Department
  - e. Aging Partners
  - f. Mayor's Office
  - g. Lincoln Police Department and Lincoln Fire & Rescue
  - h. Lincoln Transportation & Utilities
  - i. Parks & Recreation Department

**Task 5. Stakeholder Outreach** – Members of the City Resource Team will engage the major stakeholders invested in this topic in coordination with the selected Consultant. Engagement of stakeholders may include organizing focus group meetings, attending previously established stakeholder group meetings, hosting public meetings, small group discussions, and one-on-one meetings, among other potential efforts not listed here.

- a. Engagement with stakeholders should accomplish the purpose of providing a public interface for the Action Plan effort, discuss findings of the study, ask for input and guidance throughout the process, and establish the mechanisms for implementation of the Action Plan.
- b. Stakeholders to involve will be further identified through coordination between the City and Consultant but will include the following (this is not a comprehensive list and is considered a work in progress):
  - Collective Impact Lincoln
  - South of Downtown CDO
  - Lincoln Housing Authority
  - NeighborWorks Lincoln
  - Community Action Partnership
  - Lincoln Homeless Coalition
  - NIFA
  - Lincoln Community Foundation
  - Lincoln Chamber of Commerce
  - Renters Together
  - Board of Realtors
  - Landlords/property managers, REOMA
  - Builders (particularly those with multi-family or affordable housing experience)
  - City Council

- Land use attorneys
  - Neighborhoods
  - Lenders
  - Lincoln Haymarket Development Corporation
  - Others
- c. Coordination of these efforts by the City with the Consultant will better ensure cohesiveness of the findings and process
- d. Other public engagement efforts may include development and use of a project website and other online interactive discussion and engagement tools when identified as needed and developed by the City in coordination with the Consultant

**Task 6. Documentation** – The Consultant shall prepare a final document called the Lincoln Affordable Housing Coordinated Action Plan that includes findings from completed Tasks 2, 3, 4, and 5 as explained in this RFP. Identification and explanation of the most useful and effective strategies and policies for Lincoln, NE that address housing affordability should be the focus of this document. A clear direction for implementation steps should be obtained from this deliverable in order to enact the findings of this effort. An executive summary of the final document shall be included.

All submissions and work product shall be submitted in electronic format suitable for archiving by the City of Lincoln. Submissions shall include, but are not limited to meeting minutes, database and spreadsheet files created for this project, GIS files if used, reports, etc. Consultant will not copyright any work product and work will remain property of the City of Lincoln.

**Task 7. Meetings** – As necessary, the Consultant shall assist City staff in preparing meeting materials (i.e., handouts, PowerPoint presentations, displays) and attend meetings for presentation and question/answer purposes as needed. Regular project meetings between the City and Consultant shall occur to ensure completion of project tasks.