



PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

400 LA CROSSE STREET | LA CROSSE, WI 54601 | P: (608) 789-7512

Flood Hazard Mitigation Plan

Request for Proposals (RFP) - Draft

Introduction

The City of La Crosse, Wisconsin, has a population of 51,227 and is the largest city in Wisconsin along the Mississippi River. It is part of the Driftless Region, an area known for its river bluffs untouched by glaciers. The Black River and La Crosse River pass through the city. The river and bluff floodplains contain over twelve hundred nonconforming residential, commercial, and industrial structures.

The City is seeking the services of a qualified professional planning consulting firm or firms to prepare a Flood Hazard Mitigation Plan (FHMP) in accordance with a detailed Scope of Services and meeting the requirements of 44 CFR §201.6. These requirements are outlined in FEMA's *Local Mitigation Planning Handbook*. Interested firms must demonstrate qualifications and expertise in the preparation of such plans. The detailed Scope of Services pursuant to this Request for Proposals, and other pertinent documents, are available on the City of La Crosse's website: <https://www.cityoflacrosse.org/your-government/boards-committees/floodplain-advisory-committee>.

Interested consulting firms submitting proposals, or the team comprised of several firms, must have expertise and experience in the preparation of flood hazard mitigation plans in Wisconsin. Such expertise and experience must include data analyses, mapping capabilities, assessment of existing Flood Insurance Studies (FIS) and Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM), land use, hydrogeology, and other relevant/pertinent conditions to plan development, goal formulation, implementation strategies, as well as extensive public engagement experience.

Tentative RFP Schedule

- Issue RFP July 17, 2020
- Written questions from consultants due July 31, 2020
- Responses from the City due Aug. 7, 2020
- **Proposals due Aug. 14, 2020**
- Proposal evaluation completed Aug. 21 2020
- Consultant Selection Aug. 28, 2020

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KEVIN CLEMENTS, HOUSING SPECIALIST
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Scope of Services

The work of the firm shall consist of five main Tasks as described below:

- **Task 1:** Preparation of all planning documents, studies, maps and other relevant material associated with, and the writing of, the Flood Hazard Mitigation Plan consistent with the requirements of 44 CFR §201.6;
- **Task 2:** Attendance at meetings with the FHMP, facilitation of discussion at said meetings, and review of work products and findings during the FHMP plan process;
- **Task 3:** Creation and management of the public engagement process, including the development and administration of online surveys and analysis of survey results/feedback;
- **Task 4:** Presentation of the FHMP document and findings to the City Plan Commission. Presentation may also be required to the City Council; and
- **Task 5:** Revisions to the Draft FHMP document which shall comprise the final document(s), and transmittal of all deliverables to the City.

Main Task Details

Task 1: Plan Preparation

The FHMP shall:

- Establish the planning area and resources. The municipal boundary shall serve as a starting point, but may contain areas outside where advantageous to planning efforts.
- Document the planning process
- Review community authorities, policies, programs, and resources available to accomplish mitigation, and participation in the National Flood Insurance Program
- Conduct a risk assessment
- Model stormwater and potential flood storage areas
- Develop a mitigation strategy, including goals, actions, implementation plan, updating the mitigation strategy, and communication. Goals may include elevating land, buildings, and utilities (at the block- and neighborhood-scale); floodplain preservation, restudying the floodplain based on models and methods used for Ebner Coulee, ~~and~~ studying the feasibility of levy certification, targeting houses for acquisition and replacement, differentiating between ground and surface water, and increasing La Crosse's Community Rating System score.
- Identify stakeholders including residents, elected officials, FEMA and State DNR, Army Corps, neighborhood associations, and more.
- Identify plan maintenance procedures and recommendations for continued public involvement

Task 2: FHMP Steering Committee and City Staff Technical Advisory Committee Facilitation

A FHMP Steering Committee and City Staff Technical Advisory Committee will be established to assist in developing and making recommendations for the FHMP pursuant to Federal statutes. The firm shall prepare all necessary presentation material on findings and present said findings to the Steering Committee and City Staff Technical Advisory Committee for discussion and feedback. The firm should expect the Steering Committee and City Staff Technical Advisory Committee to meet a maximum of 18 times during the contract period. The firm shall work with the Floodplain Manager to facilitate multi-jurisdictional planning coordination and engage local leadership. The Floodplain Manager shall administer the activities of the Steering Committee and City Staff Technical Advisory Committee.

Task 3: Public Engagement Process

Community involvement in the planning process, from FHMP inception through adoption, is a critical element that helps ensure achievement of goals. The firm shall propose and administer a community engagement and public participation process to maximize community participation and facilitate consensus throughout this planning process understanding the dynamics of planning for a multi-cultural community. The firm shall attend all public meetings as well as individual meetings with various neighborhoods, community groups, and other stakeholders unless otherwise determined by the Floodplain Manager. The firm shall also provide to the City information/data/material/findings related to the FHMP process for the City to upload onto its Web page as well as offer innovative measures for the communicating the findings of the FHMP process to keep the public informed. The lead project person responsible for the public engagement process shall possess and document significant public engagement experience.

Task 4: Presentation of the FHMP document and findings to the City Plan Commission, Common Council

The firm shall present the FHMP document and findings to the City Plan Commission. If warranted, as determined by the Floodplain Manager, the firm will also be expected to present the FHMP to the Common Council. Additional meetings with the City Plan Commission and Common Council may be necessary during the adoption process.

Task 5: Completion and Delivery of FHMP Document(s)

Deliverables shall include twenty (20) printed bound color copies of the FHMP document, including any appendices, in addition to electronic versions of each in a PDF format. All maps shall also be delivered to the City separately in both an ArcGIS and final PDF format. Stormwater models and flood storage areas shall be delivered separately in final PDF format.

Fee

The City has allocated \$150,000 to prepare the FHMP, including all reimbursables. The firm shall execute a lump sum contract for work outlined in the Scope of Services. The firm shall submit monthly invoices for the percentage of work completed under each Task. The City will not be held responsible for any costs incurred for work performed in preparation of a proposal, or for any work performed prior to the execution of a contract.

Schedule

Firm proposals must include a projected schedule outlining the Tasks of the FHMP process. Tasks 1-3 are expected to take approximately 18 months to complete once the firm is retained and a contract is executed with the City. Presentation of the FHMP to the Planning Commission as required by statutes, as well as any meeting with the City Council to present the Update, shall extend beyond such 18-month period. The firm shall revise the FHMP document(s) to address comments during the adoption process, as directed by the Floodplain Manager, and complete and submit the final documents. The City expects the FHMP process, including the statutory adoption process, to be complete by the end of 2022. Firms may propose an alternate schedule, but in no case shall said schedule extend beyond the noted completion date. The schedule submitted by the firm shall provide projected dates for public meetings, surveys, and topics for discussion at each such meeting.

Firm Qualifications

The City seeks a firm with demonstrated experience and planning expertise in the preparation of flood hazard mitigation plans in communities similar in size to La Crosse as well as similar both demographically and geographically. The firm should not only have a working knowledge of major flood hazard mitigation plan themes but innovative approaches to the preparation of plans of conservation and redevelopment. The selected firm must have a strong track record in conducting public outreach including, but not limited to, facilitating public meetings, web surveys, social media, stakeholder interviews, meetings with committees, and reaching consensus in a diverse urban community.

The firm shall possess a broad range of planning professionals. Specific expertise must include floodplain management, GIS, civil engineering, urban planning, conservation practices, infrastructure, sustainability, statistics and demographic data, and community development. As noted, the firm and the personnel assigned to this project must have extensive and specific expertise in the preparation of plans of conservation and redevelopment, including technical knowledge and commensurate writing skills.

Proposal Format and Components

ALL PROPOSALS ARE DUE TO THE OFFICE OF THE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPT., CITY OF LA CROSSE BY 5:00 PM ON FRIDAY, AUGUST 14, 2020.

Interested firms shall submit seven (7) physical copies and one (1) electronic copy of its response to this Request for Proposals, inclusive of all required materials, to the Planning & Development Department, 400 La Crosse St. La Crosse, WI 54601, during normal office hours by no later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday, August 14, 2020.

Proposals from a team of firms will also be accepted. In such cases, a lead firm must be identified for contracting purposes, and the lead firm will be legally responsible to the City for performance under the total contract. The lead firm will be responsible for all payments to other firms or sub-consultants on its team. Qualifications must be submitted for each member of a team of firms and each firm must clearly identify who from their firm will work on the project. Each person assigned to work on this project from any firm must have expertise and experience to conduct such relevant work.

The proposal must include:

1. A cover letter detailing the interest of the firm and a description of current workload (to demonstrate capability to undertake the work as required);
2. An overview of the firm's proposal as well as name, title, phone number, and email address of the contact person to whom all questions concerning the proposal may be directed.
3. A company profile including firm size and length of time in business.
4. Identification of the project team, including the lead project manager and any sub-consultants, and their associated resumes. Experience of each individual team member must be provided as well as roles and responsibilities, and disclosure of any shared interests among the firm and proposed sub-consultants, e.g. parent-subsidiary, joint ventures, formal affiliations.
5. A description of related experience in the preparation of flood hazard mitigation plans including the submission of a minimum of two (2) examples of flood hazard mitigation plans prepared by the firm for a municipality similar to La Crosse, which the firm contends exemplifies its best work relative to preparation of a FHMP.
6. A proposed project schedule.
7. An outline of a proposed project approach to the preparation of the City of La Crosse's FHMP and a proposal for a public engagement process.
8. An overview of how the firm intends to ensure that the FHMP meets the requirements of 44 CFR §201.6.
9. A minimum of three (3) references for work on a flood hazard mitigation plan and contact information.
10. A detailed budget breakdown by main Task as described herein, including the assignment of key personnel, and the total not to exceed budget.

Proposals must be signed by a representative of the firm having legal authority to contract on behalf of the firm. Proposals shall be considered legal offers and must remain open for a period of 90 days from the closing date of submissions.

During this Covid-19 pandemic, the City will continue to receive responses from prospective bidders via e-mail and the U.S. Postal Service or a private carrier/delivery service.

Please be aware that due to the Covid-19 health emergency, the U.S. mail and deliveries from private carriers/delivery services are not always received by the Planning & Development Department on a daily basis. Therefore, any prospective bidder submitting a bid response is encouraged to notify Lewis Kuhlman, Environmental Planner, via email at kuhlmanl@cityoflacrosse.org, or by phone at (608) 789-7361, that a bid response has been submitted by U.S. mail, or by a private carrier/delivery service.

Proposal Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be vetted by a selection committee of City representatives in accordance with the following criteria:

Qualifications & Experience

- Technical competence of the firm and qualifications of key personnel assigned to this project (20 points).
- Experience in the preparation of FHMPs for municipalities comparable in size to La Crosse and in accordance with Federal Statutes (15 points).
- Thoroughness and clarity of approach demonstrating understanding of the FHMP process and City's objectives (15 points).
- Creative and established successful interactive public engagement experience (15 points).
- Demonstrated strength in expressing information in written and graphic form (20 points)

Schedule

- Capacity and ability to meet the project schedule within the stated timeframe (10 points).

Financial

- Ability to complete the project within the proposed budget (5 points).

Based on the quality and quantity of RFP responses, the City will select no more than four (4) firms to be interviewed. It is required that the lead project manager, author of the document (if different), and the person who will lead the public engagement process be present at the interview. The interviews are anticipated to take place the week of August 24, 2020

The City of La Crosse reserves the right to accept or reject any and all submissions, and/or waive technical defects, irregularities and omissions, and award the contract to the firm deemed, in its sole discretion, to be in the City's best interest. The award of the bid is subject to negotiation of a contract the terms of which are in form and substance satisfactory to the City, including but not limited to, pertinent insurance provisions.

Contract Requirements

The firm selected to perform the work will be required to enter into a professional services contract with the City of La Crosse. The City's standard terms and conditions are attached as **Attachment A**. Please review Attachment A and forward the insurance requirements section to their insurance agents prior to submitting a proposal. The City requires the firm to provide certificates of insurance as described in the contract.

Freedom of Information

All materials submitted in response to this request for proposals are subject to the terms of State laws relative to freedom of information.

Questions Regarding RFP

Questions regarding this Request for Proposals must be directed to Lewis Kuhlman, AICP & CRM, Environmental Planner, Planning and Development Department, via email on or before Friday, July 31, 2020 at kuhlmanl@cityoflacrosse.org.