



Request for Proposals - Draft

Climate Action Plan

ISSUED: Monday, May 17th, 2021

PROPOSALS DUE: Friday, June 18th, 2021

PREPARED BY:

City of La Crosse
400 La Crosse St.
La Crosse, WI 54601

CONTACT:

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All questions must be made in writing, directed to the above contact, and received by **June 11, 2021**. Responses from the City that substantially alter this RFP will be issued in the form of a written addendum.

ANDREA TRANE, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND ASSESSMENT
TIM ACKLIN, AICP, SENIOR PLANNER
LEWIS KUHLMAN, AICP, ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNER
JACK ZABROWSKI, ASSOCIATE PLANNER
ERIN DUFFER, PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANT

CAROLINE GREGERSON, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATOR
DAWN REINHART, NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATE
TARA FITZGERALD, PROGRAM COORDINATOR
KEVIN CLEMENTS, HOUSING SPECIALIST
KEVIN CONROY, HOUSING REHABILITATION SPECIALIST

Introduction

The City of La Crosse is seeking a qualified consultant to assist staff with the creation of a Climate Action Plan that will:

- Inventory municipal and community greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions
- Assess climate risks and vulnerabilities
- Define ambitious climate mitigation, resilience and energy targets
- Guide the city to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050;
- Recommend a path to transition toward a zero-waste economy that prioritizes waste reduction and re-use of resources;
- Ensure that recommended actions incorporate the needs of all members of the community in order to create equitable outcomes;
- Position La Crosse to maintain a high quality of life with livable neighborhoods and a strong business environment; and,
- Facilitate to mobilize broad community action around climate change.

I. Background

About La Crosse

The City of La Crosse, located at the confluence of the Mississippi, Black, and La Crosse River, encompasses approximately 23.8 square miles. With a population of over 51,800, La Crosse is the largest city in La Crosse County.

La Crosse is a mixed residential and commercial community, with a multimodal transportation network. The largest land use in the City is residential, comprised of single-family and multi-family housing options. Commercial and industrial uses constitute the second largest land use category. As an urbanized city, redevelopment and small-scale infill are the predominate forms of new development within established zoning. The City operates under a Council/Mayor form of government. The thirteen-member Common Council serves as the legislative body, represents the entire community and is empowered by the City Charter to formulate citywide policy. The Mayor, elected by citizens, serves as the chief executive officer and is responsible for the day-to-day administration of City affairs. The Climate Action Plan Steering Committee will provide guidance in the update of the Climate Action Plan.

La Crosse Sustainability Efforts

The City of La Crosse is committed to environmental stewardship and sustainability. In 2009, the City adopted the Strategic Plan for Sustainability, which was prepared by the ad hoc Sustainability Advisory Committee. This plan provided the City with an overall framework for addressing a variety of sustainability initiatives. It also provided a path to meet the Wisconsin Energy Independent Community Partnership's goal of getting 25 percent its electricity and transportation fuels from renewable resources by the year 2025. The Common Council passed a

resolution in 2019, which set a goal of reaching carbon neutrality community wide, in both energy and transportation, by 2050.

Project Description

The City of La Crosse is seeking consultant services to recommend new GHG emission reduction targets through 2030 that align with recommendations from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. The consultant will produce a Climate Action Plan (CAP), which will be the City's roadmap for achieving the newly established reduction goals. The CAP should be reader-friendly, with clear strategies to enable the City to achieve or exceed GHG reduction goals.

Related Documents and City Efforts

The following documents are related to the update of the Climate Action Plan:

- **Comprehensive Energy Services** (entered into in 2019): The City entered into a performance contract with Johnson Controls on energy improvement measures that are paid for by their savings. After doing lighting retrofits; replacing some boilers, chillers, and HVAC equipment; and installing solar panels, JCI will begin a third phase expanding these types of projects to other municipal buildings.
- **Partners in Energy**: Partners in Energy is a collaboration with La Crosse's electric utility, Xcel Energy, to develop energy actions that will feed into the CAP. (<https://xcelenergycommunities.com/>)
- **Strategic Plan for Sustainability** (adopted in 2009): The City of La Crosse adopted its first Sustainability Plan with the guidance of the Sustainability Commission. The plan serves as a comprehensive strategy to reduce GHG emissions. (<https://www.cityoflacrosse.org/home/showpublisheddocument/1614/637141808681330000>)
- **Sustainability Indicators Report for 2019**: The Sustainable Indicators Report shows the progress La Crosse has made on its Strategic Plan goals. (<https://www.cityoflacrosse.org/home/showpublisheddocument/1612/637141807374030000>)
- **Greenhouse Gas Inventory for 2019**: The Green House Gas Inventory provides the City with an overall measurement of greenhouse gas emissions and template for future inventories. (<http://cityoflacrosse.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=9285714&GUID=D7E76F06-27D5-4D9C-BABA-D8913ED93DA2>)
- **Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan** (adopted in 2012): The Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan provides a broad vision, strategies, and actions for improving the bicycle & pedestrian environment in La Crosse. (<https://www.cityoflacrosse.org/home/showpublisheddocument/1356/637129579176430000>)
- **Flood Hazard Mitigation Planning**: The Floodplain Advisory Committee is currently undertaking a planning process to assess the possibility of different mitigation measures to reduce the number of structures in the floodplain.
- **Green Complete Streets Ordinance**: La Crosse adopted the first complete streets ordinance in Wisconsin and incorporated a green infrastructure component. (https://library.municode.com/wi/la_crosse/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=PTIGEOR_CH40STSI_ARTIINGE_S40-14GRCOST)
- **Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Strategic Plan** (adopted 2020): This 5-year plan presents the framework for open space management and recreations programs. (<https://www.cityoflacrosse.org/home/showdocument?id=3993>)

- **Comprehensive Plan** (adopted in 2002): In 2002, the City of La Crosse updated its Comprehensive Plan “Confluence.” This update provides a long-term plan for the City’s physical development, as well as its goals and policies. The Comprehensive Plan will be updated imminently. (<https://www.cityofla-crosse.org/home/showpublisheddocument/1368/637129579204730000>)

II. Scope of Work

The City is seeking proposals that generally reflect the following scope. Consultants are encouraged to suggest refinements and innovative methodologies that ultimately achieve the tasks described below. City staff will work closely with the selected consultant and are prepared to contribute to in-house task assistance. The proposal should indicate which tasks would be appropriate and/or desirable for City staff to complete.

Task 1. Analyze GHG Emissions

Based on a review of the City’s Strategic Plan for Sustainability, most recent Sustainability Indicators Report, most recent GHG inventory, and local conditions, the consultant should provide a GHG emissions inventory update and analysis. The City of La Crosse completed a GHG emission inventory in 2019 in ICLEA’s Clear Path. The goal of reaching carbon neutrality included intermediary goals with a baseline date of 2015. The consultant will assist with a 2020 GHG emissions inventory, and if possible a 2015 GHG inventory.

Task 2. Recommend GHG Emission Reduction Targets

Based on the findings of Task 1, the consultant needs to identify GHG emission reduction targets in order for the City to meet a 2030 GHG emission reduction target that aligns with the IPCC recommendations and community-wide carbon neutrality goal by 2050.

Task 3. Forecast GHG Emission Reductions

The consultant should review existing inventory data and develop current inventory data to measure the City’s progress in reducing GHGs against the recommended Baseline. The consultant must also create a GHG emission reductions forecast and determine scenarios to achieve new reduction targets developed in Task 2. The consultant must evaluate and summarize the impact of anticipated state and federal policies and programs on GHG emission reductions and incorporate those into this task as appropriate. Scenarios should be analyzed by their potential emissions reduction, cost and benefit, estimated feasibility, estimated timeline, and associated co-benefits.

Task 4. Engage City Commissions/Common Council and Community

City Commissions and Common Council Engagement

The Climate Action Plan Steering Committee, Plan Commission, and Common Council should be engaged in the update of the CAP. The Climate Action Plan Steering Committee will be the primary advising body to review and analyze recommended climate action strategies. The Plan Commission will be tasked with review of any necessary Comprehensive Plan Amendments. The Common Council will be the final body adopting the updated CAP and General Plan Amendments.

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The consultant is expected to prepare reports, presentations, and updates and attend and engage the commissions and Common Council throughout the CAP update process. The consultant should plan to attend and report out at a minimum of the following: five Climate Action Plan Steering Committee meetings, one Planning Commission meeting, and one Common Council meeting.

Community Engagement

The consultant should propose a robust community outreach strategy based on successful outcomes and experience with similar projects in other communities. At a minimum, the consultant should plan to facilitate two public workshops to engage the community.

Task 5. Coordinate with Related City Efforts

The City is undergoing a Comprehensive Plan update, among other efforts. The City aims to develop and adopt the CAP as an amendment to the existing Comprehensive Plan. However, the consultant would need to stay coordinated and aligned with the City's current General Plan update process. The City is also working with its electric utility, Xcel Energy, through their Partners in Energy Program on actions that will feed into the CAP.

Task 6. Draft Climate Action Plan

The consultant should develop a draft CAP using the GHG emission analysis that is described in Tasks 1-3 and through a collaborative process as described in Task 4 and 5. The specific strategies and priority actions selected to meet the recommended target reductions should be summarized into a strategic framework with specific near-term implementation plans and a schedule for longer-term implementation plan development. Measures should identify agencies and departments responsible, indicators for success, potential partnerships, recommended funding sources, and appropriate methods to assess progress.

In addition to these report components, the CAP should incorporate the following overarching themes:

- **Equity:** The plan should detail impacts on different communities and groups within the cities, and how the implementation will incorporate equity and empowerment considerations;
- **Benefits Framing:** The plan should reinforce the benefits of climate action and focus on how the plan's elements could improve community well-being. The plan should discuss both the costs of inaction in addition to discussing the costs of the recommended actions.
- **Partnerships:** The plan should incorporate actions that partners can take, and how the community can leverage these partnerships to initiate stronger climate action.

Task 7. Support City in Adoption of the Climate Action Plan and General Plan Amendments

The consultant should support City staff in preparing reports, presenting, and obtaining approval of the finalized CAP from the Climate Action Plan Steering Committee and obtaining approval of the Comprehensive Plan Amendments from the Plan Commission. Additionally, the consultant should support City staff in preparing an Administrative Report to Common Council and presenting the finalized CAP and General Plan Amendments for adoption by Common Council.

III. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

The following materials should be submitted with the proposal:

1. *Title Page*: Include the RFP subject, firm name, address, telephone number, email address, contact name(s) and date.
2. *Overview*: Include a summary of the proposer's understanding of the project, including a brief summary of the proposed approach.
3. *Scope and Timelines*: Provide a detailed proposed scope and projected timeline to conduct and complete the tasks as outlined in the Scope of Work.
4. *Community Engagement*: Community engagement is critical to the CAP process. The proposer should highlight how the proposer plans to engage the community and gather public input.
5. *Qualifications*: Provide an overview of the proposer's experience and history in performing this type of work in Wisconsin. Provide at least three references of local government clients for which the consultant has rendered similar services. Proposers with project experience with similar demographics and population size as La Crosse are preferred.
6. *Cost Proposal*: Please provide a full description of the expected expenditure of funds for the proposed work. The cost breakdown should include a breakdown of expenses by task and key personnel. The cost proposal should also include options for reducing or adding services. **Costs should not exceed \$187,500.** Any tasks within the scope, but not within the budget may be listed as a la carte items for consideration by the City.

IV. CONSULTANT SELECTION CRITERIA AND PROCEDURE

Responding firms and/or teams will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. Demonstrated understanding of the requested work and responsiveness to the scope of services;
2. Quality and completeness of proposal;
3. Related and recent Climate Action Plan update experience of similar scope and complexity among Upper Mississippi River and Wisconsin;
4. Expertise and experience of the proposed project team members, and the in-house expertise, or inclusion of sub-consultants, to fully address all items noted in scope of work;
5. Ability to perform the work within a reasonable time frame and budget;
6. Creativity in approach to the scope of work and requested deliverables;
7. Acceptance of the City's Standard Contract for Services and insurance requirements, including any proposed changes to the agreement or insurance coverages (See Attachment);
8. Public meeting facilitation and community engagement expertise and techniques; and
9. References.

The top proposals will be invited to an interview. The interview will help to clarify each proposal and the approach and qualifications for the project. Based upon the interview and evaluation of the proposals, the top-ranked consultant will be recommended to the Common Council.

General Provisions and Conditions

The City reserves the right to:

1. Reject any and all responses.
2. Negotiate with more than one consultant.
3. Waive minor irregularities in a response.
4. Cancel, revise, or extend this solicitation.
5. Request additional information on any response beyond that required by this RFP.
6. Modify the selection process set forth in this RFP upon written notification to all respondents who have not been rejected at the time of modification.
7. Request substitution of sub-consultants.

V. SUBMISSION

The City will accept submittals through Friday, June 18, 2021 at 5:00PM. Submittals must include one (1) digital PDF copy on a USB drive or submitted via a file sharing service such as Dropbox. Submittals should be organized in the same order as the requirements listed above. The City will then review submittals and schedule interviews the week of June 28, 2021.

We look forward to your participation in this project. Inquiries and/or responses may be directed to:

City of La Crosse, Planning and Development Department
ATTN: Lewis Kuhlman
400 La Crosse St
La Crosse, WI 54601
(608-789-7361
kuhlmanl@cityoflacrosse.org

VI. ESTIMATED PROJECT TIMETABLE

The anticipated project schedule to commence work is as follows:

PROJECT BENCHMARK	DATE
Request for Proposals Available	Monday, May 17, 2021
Last Day to Submit Questions	Friday, June 11, 2021
Proposal Due at the City	Friday, June 18, 2021 at 5:00PM
Consultant Interviews	Week of June 28, 2021
Consultant Selection	Thursday, July 8, 2021
Council Meeting – Award Contract	Thursday, August 12, 2018

VII. ATTACHMENT

Attachment 1: Standard Contract for Services