

Forward Pinellas Request for Proposals (RFP) for Audit Services

February 2017

Scope of Services

Forward Pinellas is requesting proposals from qualified auditing firms to provide audits of the financial records and transaction of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and the Pinellas Planning Council (PPC) for Pinellas County for the year ending September 30, 2017, with an option to provide on a year by year basis such services for up to two additional fiscal years.

The audits for the MPO and PPC shall be conducted pursuant to all applicable laws, rules, and regulations governing each entity. The audit for the MPO is to be conducted in accordance with but not necessarily limited to the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996, 31 U.S.C. s. 7501 et. Seq., OMB Circular A-133 [49 CFR 18.26], "Audits of State, Local Government, and Non-Profit Organizations", Section 215.97, F.S. "Florida Single Audit Act", Rules 10.550 and 10.650, "Rules of the Auditor General" and 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart F "Audit Requirements". The audits shall include review of the accounting control structures and of the compliance with budgetary and legal requirements of the Metropolitan Planning Organization and the Pinellas Planning Council in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted by the United States of America (U.S. GAAP). Both audits shall also be conducted in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America (U.S. GAAS) and the standards for financial audits contained in Government Auditing Standards, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. As required by Chapter 10.550, Rule of the Auditor General for Local Governmental Entity Audits the auditor will issue a written management letter upon completion of the audits.

Written reports of the audits are required containing expressions of opinion that the financial statements are fairly stated or, if a qualified or adverse or disclaimer of opinion is necessary, the reasons therefore. A draft of the financial reports for staff review is required by December 28 of each year, and the final reports by March 31 of each calendar year of the agreement. The auditor shall formally present its findings and recommendations to the Forward Pinellas Board upon completion of the audits. The auditor will provide one electronic and 14 bound copies of the final audit documents. All working papers and reports must be retained at the auditor's expense, for a minimum of five years.

An exit conference meeting with the Forward Pinellas Executive Director will be conducted at the audit conclusion. Draft copies of the audit reports and related management letters shall be made available by the auditor for inspection prior to the meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to summarize the audit results and to review any significant findings.

Forward Pinellas shall provide office space deemed adequate by the auditor to efficiently conduct the audit. Forward Pinellas staff will provide all feasible assistance, including preparation of schedules required by the auditor to expeditiously conduct the engagement.

Background

Forward Pinellas is the Metropolitan Planning Organization and Pinellas Planning Council for Pinellas County. In its role as the MPO, Forward Pinellas is a countywide transportation planning agency operating in accordance with Federal Law (23USC 134 and 135) and Chapter 339 of the Florida Statutes.

Forward Pinellas must ensure that existing and future expenditure of public funds for transportation projects and programs are based on a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive planning process. The MPO is primarily funded through federal grant programs.

The MPO receives grant revenues from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged. The MPO receives several grants and the amounts vary year to year. These are formula grants awarded to the MPO to carry out its responsibilities under federal and state law. Occasionally, the MPO received discretionary grants. One such grant is the Partnership for Healthy Communities grant awarded to the MPO by the Pinellas County Health Department. Grant funds may be used for staff salaries, capital purchases, transportation services and consultant services. Supplementary funding (e.g. the local match for federal grants) is provided by Pinellas County.

The MPO is a FTA designated recipient which includes the responsibility of receiving, passing through and administering grant funds on behalf of other entities or subgrantees. Currently, the MPO is administering five (5) FTA grants to subgrantees. The grants will also be included in the MPO audit. The prior years' audit reports are available online.

The PPC was established by a Special Act of the Florida legislature in 1984 and is responsible for developing and administering a countywide land use plan. The PPC is a dependent special district and an independent appointing authority in the Pinellas County governmental structures. Pursuant to agreement, the PPC provides staff services to the MPO. The PPC pays staff salaries and is reimbursed by the MPO for those services that are required to fulfill the MPO's planning requirements. The PPC receives its funding from ad valorem taxes and through compensation for the provision of technical assistance to local governments.

LOBBYING: Lobbying of Forward Pinellas employees and elected officials regarding this RFP by any member of a proposer's staff, or those individuals who are members of, or employed by, any legal entity affiliated with an organization that is responding to the RFP is strictly prohibited. Such actions may cause your proposal to be rejected.

NOTIFICATION OF CRIME CONVICTION: Each applicant shall notify the FDOT and Forward Pinellas within 30 days after a conviction for a contract crime applicable to it or any officers, directors, executive, shareholders active in management, employees, or agents of its affiliates. Under section 337.164, F.S. the privilege of conducting business with the FDOT shall be denied to applicants so convicted until such applicant is properly reinstated pursuant to Section 337.165, F.S. and Rule 14-75, F.A.C.

FEDERAL DEBARMENT: By signing and submitting a Letter of Response/Proposal, the auditor certifies that no principal (which includes officers, directors, or executives) is presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from participation on this transaction by any federal department or agency.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENTERPRISE PROGRAM STATEMENT: Forward Pinellas does not discriminate on any basis, as required by 49 USC 5332 (which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, sex or age in employment of business opportunity), Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, 42 USC 2000d to 2000d-4, Title 49 CFR, Part 21, and §760.10, Florida Statutes (which, in addition to the factors cited above, prohibits discrimination on the

basis of pregnancy, handicap, or marital status). The MPO ensures, in accordance with 49 CFR Part 26 that certified FDOT Disadvantage Business Enterprise Program (DBE) participants have an equal opportunity to receive and participate in FDOT assisted contracts. More information on Forward Pinellas' DBE Program may be found at: <http://forwardpinellas.org/get-involved/nondiscrimination-information/>.

Proposal Requirements

Each proposal must contain the following at a minimum:

- Name and address of submitting firm.
- Key personnel who would be involved with the audit, their title and/or classification and role with the audit.
- A written narrative describing the method or manner in which the auditor proposes to satisfy the requirements with a corresponding schedule.
- A description of auditors experience in providing similar services to governmental entities.
- Four references from governmental entities that the auditor has previously performed similar contract auditing services.
- Proposed fee for one year plus the two options for renewal.
- Disadvantaged Business Enterprise certification status.
- A copy of the firm's most recent external quality control review report.
- Certificate of insurance.

Proposals should be no longer than 30 pages.

Submittals

Questions concerning the RFP must be submitted via email to Sarah Perch (sperch@forwardpinellas.org) by 3:30 p.m. on February 14, 2017. Responses to all questions received will be posted at one time by February 17, 2017 at 3:30 p.m. Interested firms must send completed proposals no later than February 24, 2017 at 3:30 p.m. Proposals may be emailed to sperch@forwardpinellas.org or mailed to the address listed below:

Sarah Perch, AICP
Forward Pinellas
310 Court Street, 2nd Floor
Clearwater, Florida 33756

Selection Process

From the received proposals, the Forward Pinellas Staff Auditor Selection Committee shall review and rank the proposals on or before March 8, 2017. Proposals are to remain in effect for 90 calendar days from date of submission. Proposals shall be ranked in regard to best value for Forward Pinellas, which will be based upon a combination of price and qualitative considerations. Qualitative considerations will include the firms' understanding of requested services (up to 20 points), ability to satisfy the requirements of the corresponding schedule and overall work plan (up to 10 points), their proposed project approach and technical ability (up to 20 points), experience of firm (up to 20 points), ability of

professional personnel assign to project (up to 15 points), proposed fee (up to 10 points) and DBE status (up to 5 points). Upon review of all proposals received by the deadline, Forward Pinellas may seek clarification on proposals and/or schedule interviews with proposing firms.

Forward Pinellas staff will negotiate a contract with the highest ranked and qualified firm. If negotiations with the highest-ranked firm fail, Forward Pinellas may negotiate with the next-highest-ranked and qualified firm. Notwithstanding, Forward Pinellas reserves the right to reject any or all proposals for any reason, including but not limited to if the Request for Proposals does not elicit at least three competitive quotes from qualified sources. The contract shall be in substantial compliance with the contract attached hereto as Exhibit A.

Schedule*

RFP Release Date: February 8, 2017

Questions on RFP: February 14, 2017 by 3:30 p.m.

Answer to Questions on RFP: February 17, 2017 by 3:30 p.m.

Complete Proposals Due: February 24, 2017 by 3:30 p.m.

Selection Meeting: March 8, 2017, time to be determined**

*Any changes to the schedule will be posted on the Forward Pinellas website.

** Selection meeting time will be posted on the Forward Pinellas website when set

Protest Procedure

- (a) Bid/proposal protests. Any actual or prospective bidder, proposer, who is allegedly aggrieved in connection with the issuance of a bid/proposal package or pending award of a contract may protest to the Executive Director of Forward Pinellas.
- (b) Posting. Forward Pinellas shall post the selection committee's contract award recommendations on the DemandStar and Forward Pinellas website. The contract award recommendation shall be publicly posted on the above websites no less than three full business days after the recommendation or decision is made.
- (c) Requirements to protest.
 - (1) If the protest relates to the content of the bid/proposal package, a formal written protest must be filed no later than 5:00pm on the fifth full business day after issuance of the bid/proposal package.
 - (2) If the protest relates to the award of a contract, a formal written protest must be filed no later than 5:00 p.m., on the fifth full business day after posting of either the contract award recommendation of the contract award itself. The formal written protest shall identify the protesting party and the solicitation involved; include a clear statement of the grounds on which the protest is based; refer to the statutes, laws, ordinances or other legal authorities which the protesting party deems applicable to such grounds; and specifically request the relief to which the protesting party deems itself entitled by application of such authorities to such grounds.
 - (3) A formal written protest is considered filed with Forward Pinellas when the Executive Director of Forward Pinellas receives it at the address of 310 Court Street, 2nd Floor, Clearwater, Florida 33756. Accordingly, a protest is not timely filed unless it is received

within the time specified above. Failure to file a formal written protest within the time period specified shall constitute a waiver of the right to protest and result in relinquishment of all rights by the bidder/proposer.

- (d) Right of interested parties. Bidders or protesters, other than the protester, which would be directly affected by the favorable resolution of a protest relating to a recommended award, shall have the right to provide written documentation related to the professional solicitation. Said interested parties shall be solely responsible for determining whether a protest has been filed. Any documentation submitted by an interested party must be filed with the Executive Director no later than 5:00pm on the fifth full business day after Forward Pinellas posts notification that a protest has been filed. Any interested party submitting documentation shall bear all costs, including legal representation, relating to the submission.
- (e) Sole remedy. These procedures shall be the sole remedy for challenging an award. Bidder/proposers are prohibited from attempts to influence, persuade, or promote a bid protest through any other channels or means. Such attempts shall be cause for suspension or disqualification of a bid/proposal package or pending or actual award of a contract.
- (f) Time limits. The time limits in which protests must be filed as specified herein may be altered by specific provisions in the bid/request for proposal.
- (g) Authority to resolve. The executive Director of Forward Pinellas shall resolve the protest in a fair and equitable manner and shall render a written decision stating the reason for the action with a copy furnished to the protesting party and all substantially affected persons no later than 5:00pm on the fifth full business day after the filing thereof.
 - (1) If it is determined that the solicitation or award is in violation of law or the regulations and procedures of the bid/proposal package, the Executive Director of Forward Pinellas shall immediately cancel or revise the solicitation or award as deemed appropriate.
 - (2) If it is determined that the solicitation or award should be upheld, the executive Director of Forward Pinellas shall issue a decision in writing pursuant to the requirements above. The decision shall be final and conclusive as to Forward Pinellas unless any further action is taken or a party commences as action in court.
- (h) Stay of procurement during protests. There shall be no stay or procurement during protests.

TRUTH IN NEGOTIATIONS:

The Auditor certifies to the truth-in-negotiation and that wage rates and other factual unit costs supporting the compensation are accurate, complete and current at the time of contracting. Further, the original contract amount and any additions thereto shall be adjusted to exclude any significant sums where Forward Pinellas determines that costs are increased due to inaccurate, incomplete or non-current wage rate and other factual unit costs.