



## **CITY OF UTICA REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

### **FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES**

#### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The City of Utica Department of Urban and Economic Development is seeking a qualified and licensed design consultant to provide commercial building architectural design services and limited construction services to the City as part of its Façade Improvement Loan Program. The Program will focus on exterior improvements to privately owned properties on both sides of Genesee Street between Oriskany Boulevard and Dakin Street (see Figure 1). At a minimum, the following services will be required of the successful respondent:

- Development of a consistent architectural theme for all properties within the target corridor, appropriate to the existing fabric and architecture of the corridor, to which all funded projects must adhere;
- Conduction of an initial exterior inspection of subject properties to determine presence of NYS building code violations and/or deteriorated material(s), as well as to ascertain the intent of the property owner relative to the funded work;
- Development of a scope of work and a rendering for each subject property;
- Perform review of submitted bids and issue professional reviews to the City of Utica relative to each submitted bid;
- Perform progress inspections of each subject property during the construction phase;
- Perform review for appropriateness for any requested change orders.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The City of Utica has allocated \$90,000 in 2016-2017 funds with additional funds likely to be allocated in the 2017-2018 program year for the Façade Improvement Loan Program. The program is federally-funded program through the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program; as such, all applicable federal guidelines, policies and procedures must be complied with in the course of administering this program. There are several objectives to the City's Façade Improvement Loan Program, including:

- Leverage private funds with public dollars in order to enhance the aesthetic of the Genesee Street corridor;

- Encourage economic development and utilization of currently vacant commercial space by empowering building owners to attract new entrepreneurs and economic activity;
- Preserve significant historic buildings to provide an environment that attracts new investment and adaptive reuse of buildings for new and expanding enterprises;
- Address blighting and hazardous conditions, code violations and accessibility concerns within deteriorating commercial spaces;

Funded projects must focus solely on improvements to the exterior of subject buildings; interior improvements are not eligible for funding through this Program.

Forgivable loans of up to \$22,500 will be awarded based on a rating system. In order to receive the full \$22,500 in federal funds, the property owner must commit a private match of at least \$7,500 for a total project budget of \$30,000. Any cost overruns beyond the \$30,000 will be the responsibility of the private property owner.

For this first round of funding, interested property owners must submit their application by 4:30 PM on Friday, March 10, 2017. It is anticipated that successful applicants will be identified within two (2) to three (3) weeks of the application deadline with the goal of initiation and completion of construction work during the 2017 construction season. Funds not awarded in the first rounds may potentially be carried forward to a subsequent round until all funds are exhausted. Similarly, if applications in the first round exceed available funding, it is possible that the City will allocate additional funds to the Program.

## **SCOPE OF SERVICES**

The City of Utica is seeking professional architectural services for the following tasks:

*Consistent design theme* – The consultant shall develop a consistent architectural theme for the Bleecker Street corridor. The theme shall be contemplative of the architecture of the existing building stock along that corridor. All funded projects shall then be reflective of and in keeping with, that design theme. The consultant shall be responsible for developing the minimum level of graphics and narrative necessary to depict and convey said design theme to owners of property receiving funding through this Program, as those owners consider the range of possible improvements for their property.

*Initial inspection* – The consultant shall be responsible for conducting an initial inspection of each property to receive Program funding. The purpose of this inspection shall be to identify existing violations of the New York State building code on the exterior of the building/property. Additionally, the inspection shall identify those elements of the exterior that are in deteriorating condition. The inspection shall include one (1) meeting with the property owner to determine their desired improvement plan.

*Development of work scope* – Based on the initial inspection and consistent with the design theme, the consultant shall develop a complete scope of work and rendering for each subject property. The scope of work shall be developed with a level of specificity and in a form that the property owner can then provide to contractors as part of a solicitation of bids. The consultant shall also prepare a confidential detailed cost estimate for each element included in the scope of work for the City to ensure that the proposed scope is within the project budget and as a guide when reviewing submitted construction bids.

*Bid review* – Each property owner receiving funds through this Program shall be responsible for the solicitation of bids. The consultant, together with appropriate City staff, shall review all bids received. Based on that review, the consultant shall prepare a formal memo to the Department of Urban & Economic Development focusing on the responsiveness of the lowest bidder.

*Construction inspection* – The consultant shall conduct a nominal number of periodic and random inspections of each project site during the construction phase to ensure work is proceeding in a safe manner consistent with the scope of work approved by the City, consultant and property owner. The consultant shall also conduct a final inspection, upon completion of construction. If it is deemed that construction has not been fully completed, the consultant shall work with City staff to develop a punch list of items to be addressed by the contractor.

*Pay requests* – The consultant shall review all requests for payment from construction contractors and shall, if appropriate, authorize said payment by the owner. This review shall include the contractors compliance with prevailing wage rates, where applicable.

*Change order review* – The consultant, together with appropriate City staff, shall review all requests for change orders.

*Dispute resolution* – The consultant will also be expected to help settle any disputes between construction contractors and property owners, including issues related to warranties.

## **INQUIRIES**

Questions regarding this Request For Proposals shall be directed to:

City of Utica  
Department of Urban & Economic Development  
Attn: Brian Thomas, AICP – Commissioner  
One Kennedy Plaza  
Utica, New York 13502  
E-mail: bthomas@cityofutica.com

All inquiries shall be made in writing up to three (3) days prior to the proposal submission deadline; responses will likewise be made in writing. All inquiries shall be made directly to the contact above; any attempts to make inquiries of other City of Utica personnel will not receive a response.

## **SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

Proposals submitted to the City of Utica in response to this Request shall include the following, at a minimum:

- Work Plan
- Fee Proposal
- Prior Experience

The Work Plan shall be a written statement which clearly demonstrates an understanding of the Program, the proposed scope of services being sought and a commitment for completing the tasks. In addition, the Work Plan shall include a list of the specific personnel who will be assigned to this program with a description of their professional qualifications.

The Fee Proposal shall be broken down into the individual work elements, depicting the anticipated level of effort in hours anticipated for a typical project. The Fee Proposal shall also identify the hourly rate to be charged for each work element, based on the personnel assigned to each element, and identification of each specific personnel.

The Prior Experience shall include a description of programs of similar size and scope in which each respondent has been involved.

One electronic copy in PDF format shall be submitted to Brian Thomas, Commissioner of Urban & Economic Development at the following e-mail address: [bthomas@cityofutica.com](mailto:bthomas@cityofutica.com). Proposals are to be submitted by 4:00 PM local time on Friday, March 17, 2017. Only those responses received prior to the time and date indicated above will be considered. After the submission date and time specified above, responses and fee proposals must remain firm for a period of not less than sixty (60) days.

Each proposal shall be prepared simply and economically, providing a straightforward and concise description of the proposer's ability to meet the requirements of the RFP. Emphasis should be on completeness and clarity of content. To that end, proposals should not exceed twenty (20) pages in total length.

#### **SELECTION CRITERIA**

The selection of a consultant for this effort will be based upon the following criteria:

- Demonstrated ability to deliver the requested tasks in a creative, cost-effective and cost-conscious manner
- Professional qualifications of the firm and individual personnel assigned to various tasks within this Program
- Quality and clarity of the proposal and a demonstrated understanding of the project objectives