

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

FOR

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEMS ASSESSMENT, STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION



**Issued by:
City of Decatur, Illinois
Economic and Community Development Department**

Proposals Due By:

**July 19, 2021, Monday at 3:00 p.m.
City of Decatur, IL
Economic & Community Development Department
#1 Gary K. Anderson Plaza
Attn: Cordaryl "Pat" Patrick
(217) 424-2727**

Introduction

Since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, residents of all ages have been dislocated and disrupted, especially those in the service workforce. We believe there is a need to assist low-moderate income individuals with re-tooling their job skills to meet the demand for entry-level and managerial careers in Decatur, IL in an equitable and intentional format. A gap in the workforce preparedness system is that descriptions and reports regarding the profile of the population to be served in low-moderate income communities, as developed by public and/or academic labor research entities, overlook important “real-life” insight to the challenges low-moderate income neighborhoods and residents face in acquiring skills and gaining employment. To effectively implement this scope of work, one must approach it through the lens of racial equity and racial healing.

The objectives for this project include:

- a. Develop a model for workforce training partners, community-based organizations, workforce development agencies and employers to coordinate, improve and enhance the workforce development system in Decatur, IL. Ideally, one agency will be the lead agency, who will provide communication and updates, report accomplishments and keep partners involved and moving to implement the shared workforce goals.
- b. Improve the workforce development system that connects and supports low-moderate income and minority residents to gainful employment and careers.
- c. Develop a comprehensive process-driven workforce development system that improves efficiency, organizational effectiveness and outcomes for low-moderate income and minority residents.
- d. Introduce innovative workforce development tools and activities designed to meet the needs of the City of Decatur.
- e. Assess the social services system and identify opportunities to collaborate with the workforce development partners.
- f. Identify and introduce a pilot training program that incorporates best practice operating procedures, designed by a multi-organizational effort.

Scope of Services

The Consultant will work closely with the city’s Economic and Community Development Department’s staff to plan and implement a series of meetings and workshops with community partners. The Consultant’s responsibilities will be focused on planning, preparing, and facilitating the meetings to identify workforce needs, existing resources and gaps in the Decatur workforce ecosystem and present a strategy and implementation roadmap to strengthen the system. The Consultant will also assist with developing the invite list for the meetings and communications about the meetings. The meeting locations and arrangements will be handled by the Economic and Community Development Department. The consultant will handle the meeting invitations, notices, minutes, agendas, and monthly reports. Meeting dates and times will not be limited to Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. The Request for Proposal completion date is within 6 months of the contract date. The following is an outline of the key tasks and services associated with each phase of the project. The tasks and services are sorted by three main categories:

- **Defining workforce needs**
- **Conducting an inventory of existing resources**
- **Analyzing Gaps and Developing a Strategy and Implementation for Action**

Phase One: Defining workforce needs

1. Identify research model, methodology and analytical tools
2. Identify and select a broad spectrum of existing secondary research and reports from public, private and non-traditional data sources
3. Merge and challenge existing data from regional and federal departments of labor and regional employers
4. Identify key regional employment clusters in Decatur, IL.
5. Identify high demand-occupations in largest employment clusters.
6. Identify and verify skills, competencies, and certifications needed by job candidates to fill high-demand job vacancies and career path opportunities
7. Match industry and employer association data to cross check secondary research data
8. Develop interview model and conduct interviews with select key employer leaders and a sample group of training providers
9. Create and distribute a survey tool to key employment sectors through industry leaders and associations
10. Analyze all inputs and design a replicable (and repeatable) workforce needs assessment tool to be used on an ongoing basis.

Steering Committee Meeting Check-in #1

Goal: To debrief from phase one, confirm approach and stakeholders/partners needed to include in phase two, and plan outreach and meeting location details.

Participants: Economic and Community Development staff, Consultant, and Key Community Leaders and Partners.

Phase Two: Conducting an inventory of existing resources

1. Identify and map existing regional workforce development intermediaries, training providers and related services.
2. Assemble a group of key representatives of public, private and community workforce development agencies to review, verify and refine inventory of existing Workforce Development resources
3. Outline a model for the creation of a web-based application to update, publish and distribute workforce development resources to employers, training providers, agencies, community organizations and residents.

Steering Committee Meeting Check-in #2

Goal: To debrief from phase two, confirm approach and stakeholders/partners needed to include in phase three, and plan outreach and meeting location details.

Participants: Economic and Community Development staff, Consultant, and Key Community Leaders and Partners.

Phase Three: Analyzing Gaps and Developing a Strategy and Implementation for Action (Workforce Eco-system)

1. Review workforce development resources identified in objective (2) and identify deficiencies and disconnects in the system serving low-moderate income and minority populations
2. Develop a process map of the existing workforce development system and identify opportunities to address deficiencies and outline a plan to address and better meet employer demand
3. Identify and outline suggested solutions to barriers that effectively exclude low-moderate income and minority individuals from participating and benefiting from regional workforce development initiatives and opportunities for economic mobility;
4. Identify and model a set of best practice intervention models (i.e., advisory/mentor relationships, training and supportive systems, apprenticeships) that would help low-moderate income and minority individual's access and navigate career pathways, connect to employers and advance careers;
5. Outline a methodology and action plan for building a cooperative infrastructure that would encompass a leadership group of community-based organizations and agencies, around the idea of working together to coordinate, improve and enhance recruitment efforts. This effort should include among other things:
 - Infographic of Workforce Development eco-system (to include partners and the services they provide)
 - How to access the workforce system guide
6. Design a model and set of procedures to work with community-based organizations and agencies to establish a contemporary 'grass roots' profile of the demographic, social and economic characteristics of populations being targeted in low-moderate income neighborhoods.
7. Identify community engagement activities, designed to coordinate and standardize recruitment activities among intermediaries and community-based organizations as a model to increase efficiency, effectiveness, and scale.

Steering Committee Meeting Check-in #3

Goal: To debrief from phase three, review final recommendations and roadmap, identify resources, partners and other stakeholders that will implement the eco-system and support for moving forward.

Participants: Economic and Community Development staff, Consultant, and Key Community Leaders and Partners.

Proposal Content

Proposals must include, at a minimum, the following information:

1. Experience of Firm/Individual. Provide a detailed description of the firm's/individual's experience in providing training, system thinking and participating directly in workforce development activities related to economic and community development. Include the type and number of clients served, as well as the size, scope, and nature of the projects involved.
2. Experience/Qualifications of Assigned Professional(s). Provide the qualifications for each individual who may be assigned to provide the Services and designate the individual who would have primary responsibility for oversight of the Services. The proposal should include an organization chart for positions and responsibilities.
3. Proposed Fees/Expenses. Proposals shall clearly state all fees and expenses to be charged for performance of the Services:
 - a. If based on an hourly rate, provide the hourly rates to be charged for each individual who would be assigned to this engagement and a general description of how billable hours will be allocated among key personnel.
 - b. Provide an explanation if fees will be calculated on any other basis. Itemize the type of expenses (other than fees) for which your firm would seek reimbursement.
 - c. It is anticipated that a maximum not to exceed amount will be established for these services.

Selection Criteria

Proposals submitted will be reviewed by the City of Decatur's staff for completeness and qualifications. Selection of a firm will be made on the basis of the following criteria in descending order of importance:

1. Expertise and experience of firm or individual;
2. Cost;
3. Professional Insurance (Errors & Omissions)
4. Consultants employer identification, DUNS Number, and Cage Code
5. Participation in the Pre-bid meeting (Zoom) on July 8, 2021, at 9:00 a.m.
For instructions to participate in the meeting, e-mail vbuckingham@decaturil.gov .

6. Responsiveness of firm to the RFP categories.

The City of Decatur, Illinois encourages submission of proposals from disadvantaged business enterprises and companies owned by minorities, women, immigrants, and veterans. The City of Decatur does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, ancestry, national origin, disability, or veteran status in consideration of this award. Equal Opportunity Employer.

Terms and Conditions

The City of Decatur reserves the right to reject any and all proposals submitted; to select one or more proposals; to void this Request and the review process and/or terminate negotiations at any time; to select separate proposals for various components of the scope of services; to select a final party/parties from among the proposals received in response to this Request. Additionally, any and all Request elements, requirements and schedules are subject to change and modification. The City of Decatur also reserves the unqualified right to modify, suspend, or terminate at its sole discretion any and all aspects of this Request process, to obtain further information from any and all respondents, and to waive any defects as to the form or content of the Request or any proposal.

This Request is not and shall not be construed to be an offer and does not commit the City of Decatur to award a contract or to defray any costs incurred in the preparation of a proposal. All submitted proposals become the property of the City of Decatur as public records. All proposals may be subject to public review on request, unless exempted by law or elsewhere in this Request.

By submitting a proposal in response to this Request, each respondent agrees for himself/herself and for his/her heirs, successors and assigns, to hold the City of Decatur, Illinois and all of their various agents, commissioners, directors, consultants, attorneys, officers and employees harmless from and against any and all claims and demands of whatever nature or type, which any such responding company, its representatives, agents, contractors, successors or assigns may have against any of them as a result of issuing this Request, revising this Request, conducting the selection process and subsequent negotiations, making a final recommendation, selecting a proposal(s), or negotiating or executing an agreement incorporating the commitments of the selected proposal(s).

By submitting a proposal, each respondent acknowledges having read this Request in its entirety and agrees to all terms and conditions set out in this Request.

Submission of Proposals

To be considered, sealed proposals must be received no later than Monday, July 19, 2021 at 3:00 p.m.

City of Decatur, Illinois
Attn: Cordaryl "Pat" Patrick
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