

# FLINT HILLS REGION

## FLINT HILLS REGIONAL COUNCIL REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) for FIVE-YEAR SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

Issued: September 9, 2022

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION DEADLINE: October 7, 2022

**E-Mail Only**

*Flint Hills Regional Council is accepting expressions of interest and statements of work to plan and prepare a five-year strategic action plan and proforma that can serve as a guide for the sustainability and expansion of the organization and its services. The final product will assess the operation and administration of the non-profit and identify and prioritize services FHRC should retain and/or add that will result in an ongoing effective partnership with the Ft. Riley US Army Military Base and will promote the quality of life and economic progress of the communities, businesses, and citizens of the Flint Hills.*

Submitted PDF File should include this completed Cover Sheet – all proposals submitted on time will receive an acknowledgement from FHRC:

Name and Address of Organization Submitting Proposal

\_\_\_\_\_

Contact person \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

**PROPOSALS ARE DUE BEFORE 5:00 P.M. CENTRAL TIME (ALL TIMES IN THIS ARE CENTRAL TIME) ON OR BEFORE OCTOBER 7, 2022 - [RFP@flinthillsregion.org](mailto:RFP@flinthillsregion.org)**

## INTRODUCTION

Flint Hills Regional Council, Inc. (FHRC) invites experienced and qualified vendor(s), project teams and/or contractor(s) to provide professional services to deliver:

- A five-year strategy and action plan for the sustainability and expansion of FHRC
- Financial planning document with proforma forecasts
- Actions steps to strengthen and enhance the organization's ability to support Ft. Riley US Army Base's (Ft. Riley) military mission, the soldiers and their families, and surrounding communities.

FHRC is a non-profit 501(c)3 voluntary service association comprised of 20 members represented by locally elected officials in the Flint Hills of East Central Kansas. Established in 2010, FHRC considers the strategic sustainability plan and financial analysis as keys to further solidify its existing program and service base and enhance its impact, relevancy, and value throughout the Flint Hills.

Examples of current work performed by FHRC include:

- The organization plays a key role working with the leadership at Ft. Riley identifying funding opportunities and conducting research that will strengthen the region and community around the base and help support the base's mission.
- The US Economic Development Administration (EDA) has designated a seven-county area<sup>1</sup> as the Flint Hills Economic Development District (FHEDD). This provides FHRC access to significant invitation-only/non-competitive funding to support projects. FHRC oversees, monitors performance, and updates the five-year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDSD).
- The EDA and FHRC will discuss potential economic development projects to fund in the region. During the COVID-19 pandemic, EDA through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Securities Act (CARES) funded multiple projects proposed by FHRC to assist the region.
- FHRC seeks collaboration and cooperation throughout the Flint Hills to pursue public, private, foundation grant opportunities. In the spring of 2022, FHRC captured two significant new grant awards. In May, FHRC was selected to receive from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) a \$500,000 grant to conduct Phase II Brownfield planning across the region. In the same timeframe, the organization was awarded a \$360,000 grant through the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation's Heartland Challenge to create programming around home-based businesses.

Operational funding has historically come from county and city memberships. Additional support comes from administrative expenses allowed in Federal or private grants. Staff can also perform specific research or program work on grants (e.g., professional planning within the EPA grant).

While FHRC has been successful in these various roles, the organization seeks to explore different funding and service options through strategic planning to begin developing a more stable funding base while delivering quality programs and services. FHRC sees this project as a way to identify valuable services or programs it can provide throughout the region which would also be a source for new revenues.

This project provides the chance to assess the value proposition provided by FHRC and strategies to enhance and stabilize the organization. Additionally, leadership feels the organization has been less successful

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<sup>1</sup> Counties that make up the FHEDD are Chase, Geary, Lyon, Morris, Pottawatomie, Riley, and Wabaunsee counties

getting out the message of the impacts and contributions FHRC makes to the region and would like those strategies to be part of its five-year plan.

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## **PROJECT OBJECTIVE**

The project's objective is to create for FHRC a five-year sustainability action plan and accompanying financial pro forma. The plan should provide a pathway to long-term sustainability consistent with:

- a mission to proactively identify and respond to opportunities and emerging challenges in the Flint Hills
- review of the long-term viability of the existing mix of programs and services and opportunities that where there is or potentially could be a demand for in the region and provide new revenue source
- organizational stability and modern sensibility of operation
- communication strategies to inform the region and member of work and benefits
- becoming a resource in grant identification, writing, and administration
- promoting in a proactive manner data trends and analyses that define the economic competitiveness and enhanced quality of life for the Flint Hills, and
- foster a strong, collaborative, and effective partnership with Ft. Riley.

The research work and retreat dialogue may identify other related goals that can be added to the above list.

## **SCOPE OF WORK**

The work will be conducted in three phases with the project completed March 10, 2023. Bidders are invited to structure their tasks and timeline for how best to successfully complete the three phases:

Phase I, Discovery: Following an initial project initiation meeting with executive director, staff, and executive committee the contractor will begin work to understand current financials, operating environment, challenges, and opportunities. The contractor will inventory and assess current services, alternatives to be considered, and less successful elements of FHRC operations.

FHRC will assist in identifying and scheduling organizations and individuals to be interviewed. A comparison of FHRC operations and services to similar regional councils in Kansas and other states should be part of the Phase I activity. Contractor will seek to identify other non-profits, besides regional councils, which have similar operations and regional collaboration responsibilities.

The presence of Fort Riley provides the region with unique opportunities and responsibilities for partnerships and cooperative planning. The contractor will need to identify and develop best practices for ongoing work with US military bases in general and specifically Ft. Riley.

The goal of Phase I is to ensure the contractor has a solid understanding and familiarity with FHRC's operations, issues, and challenges and is adequately prepared for the one-day board and stakeholder retreat scheduled for Friday, December 2, 2022.

Phase II, Define: Contractor will provide a draft agenda of the planned retreat by November 11 and participate in a discussion about the agenda on Monday, November 14 (5:00 p.m. Central Time) with the FHRC executive committee.

Expectations are the December retreat will focus on the contractor conducting a facilitated business planning and strategic organization review and discussion. Discussion will include lessons learned and key take aways from the Phase I effort. The day flow will include a morning session with FHRC partners and invited guests to listen to the Phase I presentation and participate in appropriate planning exercises. Following lunch, FHRC members will continue to meet and provide additional input and dialogue with the contractor. A meeting debrief with executive committee and staff will identify any follow up interviews with board members or other leaders in the region and steps necessary to prepare the plan.

Phase III – Develop/Communicate: the contractor will monthly update the FHRC executive committee and provide regular communication of project progress to the executive director. A presentation at the January 2023, council meeting will update the larger membership (this can be done via Zoom).

A plan review committee will be established to work with the contractor to achieve a final plan. At the February 17 council meeting, a preliminary final draft plan and financials will be presented, in person, to FHRC. The final document will present a comprehensive summary of information collected during phases I and II and communicate the strategy, financial analysis, and associated implementation plan.

Bidders can modify components of this scope of work.

## **TIMELINES**

- Proposal Release – September 9
- Zoom Pre-Bid Conference – Tuesday, September 20 at 10:00 a.m. Central Time <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89633715261>
- Proposals Due – October 7 by 5:00 p.m. central time
- Possible interviews – week of October 10
- Selection and notification – October 14
- Project underway week of October 17
- Retreat – Flint Hills Discovery Center, Manhattan KS – Friday, December 2
- Presentation of Final Draft to FHRC membership – Friday, February 17, 2023
- Deliverables received and project completed – March 10

## **PROJECT BUDGET**

FHRC has established a project budget range of \$50,000 to \$75,000.

## **SERVICES/DELIVERABLES**

- An initial kick-off meeting with staff, the executive committee and the contractor's project team.
- Monthly progress reports will be submitted to the FHRC executive director. These are not formal written documents, but summaries of the timeline and status of the projects accompanied by short narratives of new discoveries since the previous progress report.

- The selected bidder will deliver a hard copy and an electronic file that provides the detailed narrative of the three phases, the five-year plan, action steps and financial analysis.
- Deliverables will also include a hard copy and electronic file of a visually appealing with key outcome articulated in a four-page summary of the project and sustainability plan which can be distributed to a broader audience.

**The Project with final deliverables is to be completed March 10, 2023.** FHRC sees this project as vital to its ongoing work and to strengthening its presence in the region. While the project is called a sustainability plan, the thinking is this should also be a process and a document that can excite, rejuvenate, and capture an impactful future for the organization and the region.

## **PROPOSALS**

Submitted proposals should be no more than 10 pages in length (the title page and pages containing individual team resumes do not count toward the 10-page limit).

FHRC requests each proposal start with a single paragraph, explaining why the bidder should be selected for the project and would be the ideal partner for FHRC in this effort.

Proposals should include:

- Detailed summary of the approach used to carry out the Scope of Work
- Relevant experience that supports the bidder's selection, including description of the staff, and their individual roles, in performing the work
- From experience, what elements of the project, scope of work or planned outcomes the bidder may suggest be changed or altered to have a stronger outcome
- Tasks, timeline with milestones to complete the Scope of Work
- Cost Proposal - Detailed cost breakdown associated with each element and staff assigned to the project. This RFP suggests at least two on-site visits one for the actual retreat and one for a presentation to the full council on Friday, February 17, 2023. The submitted budget will present all project costs including travel and deliverables.
- Qualifications, Experience and References that support accomplish Scope of Work.

## **PROPOSAL EVALUATION PROCESS**

FHRC has established a Selection Committee to evaluate submitted proposals. The selection committee may decide to interview one or more bidder which will be done via Zoom.

The goal is to select the successful bid and have contracts signed and the project underway by October 17. This timeline will provide the contractor seven weeks before the December retreat.

The selection committee will recommend the proposal that provides the best plan for delivering a quality sustainability plan. The committee is not obligated to select the least cost proposal. The selection committee can also reject any or all proposals.

## **PROPOSAL EVALUATION FACTORS**

- Quality, creativity, clarity, and conciseness in the proposal that provide confidence the work will be completed and meet FHRC needs and expectations – up to 50 points available
- Contractor's/Vendor's Qualifications and Relevant Experience – up to 25 points available
- Best Value to provide specified services – up to 15 points available
- Time and milestones presented that will complete Scope of Work – 10 points available

## **QUESTIONS/CLARIFICATIONS**

Following the zoom pre-bid conference, clarifications and additional questions should be submitted no later than 5:00 p.m. central time, September 23, 2022 - via email (no phone calls) [RFP@flinthillsregion.org](mailto:RFP@flinthillsregion.org). FHRC will make every effort to answer all questions by Monday, September 26.

All questions and responses will be posted at the Flint Hills Region Council's website ([flinthillsregionalcouncil.org](http://flinthillsregionalcouncil.org)).

The FHRC, in its sole discretion, will determine if a clarification or response is merited.

## **SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS**

Proposals are to be submitted as PDF files **via e-mail** – transmittal email is due Friday, October 7, 2022 no later than 5:00 p.m. Central Time.

Submissions will be confirmed by FHRC within 24 hours. If you do not receive a confirmation, contact FHRC to verify that the proposal has been received.

Bids are to be emailed to: [RFP@flinthillsregion.org](mailto:RFP@flinthillsregion.org)

Thank you for considering this RFP.