

**Request for Qualifications – Consultant Services**

City of Pine Bluff, Arkansas – Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Regulations

RFQ release date: March 25th, 2018

Qualifications Due: 4:00 pm April 25th, 2018

The City of Pine Bluff, Arkansas is seeking qualified and experienced consultants to assist with a 20-year Comprehensive Plan and rewrite of the city’s land use regulations. Qualifications are being requested from qualified urban and community planning firms/individuals. A committee will select three to five qualified firms out of the responses to the RFQ. Firms are requested to submit a formal proposal for the project.

**Community Profile**

With a population of 49,083 (2010), Pine Bluff is the Jefferson County seat and the second oldest settlement on the Arkansas River. The city is the trade, arts and entertainment, recreation, and health-care center for Southeast Arkansas. Pine Bluff is home to Relyance Bank and Simmons Bank Corporation which recently engaged in a yearlong planning process for city revitalization fostered the Simmons Foundation. The effort is entitled Go Forward Pine Bluff, which is now a non-profit organization driving the effort.

A general comprehensive plan was last written in 1976. Many updates have occurred but lack consistency.

Expected Comprehensive Plan Characteristics - Overall, the City of Pine Bluff is seeking a plan that is functional and easy to read. This plan needs to be facilitated through interesting and professional graphics and maps with emphasis on minimizing wordiness of the document. Preference will be to utilize these graphics and maps in lieu of written descriptions where feasible.

**Project Goals**

Work with a steering committee to guide the development of a Comprehensive Plan that will serve as 20-year vision for Pine Bluff and a working agenda for selected Departments of the city that is acceptable to community residents. Develop land use regulations to implement this 20-year vision. We envision the work to accomplish these goals:

* Facilitate a comprehensive plan process that is outcome focused
* Employ non-traditional, cutting edge interactive public outreach, empowerment, and engagement
* Integrate urban design into new and existing neighborhoods, corridors, and special districts.
* Create strategy and policy solutions to address community and neighborhood improvement and regeneration.
* Develop strategies and conduct public engagement for at least three (3) sub-areas.
* Evaluate city-wide cost obligations vs revenue generation potential
* Identify innovative implementation strategies that advance operational goals
* Align capital improvement planning with the plan policies and goals
* Develop and/or coordinate individual department plans, as needed
* Develop fair and equitable land use regulations designed to implement plan policies and goals

**Key Comprehensive Plan Topics**

Anticipated subjects to include, but are not limited to (not in order of importance)

* Public Safety
* Community Facilities/Public Buildings including parks, recreation, and place making for leisure and cultural activity
* Community and Neighborhood Regeneration with housing variety, affordability and resiliency
* Transportation and Traffic Circulation (which includes all modes of transportation with emphasis on walkability, bike-ability, connectivity and trails)
* Public utilities and Infrastructure
* Sustainability factors
* Future Land Use that accommodates entrepreneurism, supports tourism, open space, natural resources, green infrastructure and economic development
* Review and recommendations on Land Use Regulations/Zoning Code Revision and Enforcement Provisions. This should include use of possible form-based codes and overly districts
* Overall best practices for City Departments

**Anticipated Deliverables to include:**

* Executive Summary not longer than four (4) pages.
* Plan narrative in PDF and printed format.
* Plan maps in PDF and printed format.
* Relevant GIS layers to be provided to appropriate staff upon project completion.
* Provide a training tool box to staff that will empower staff during the project outreach phase. Staff will use this to communicate with key stakeholder(s) without the consultant being present both during the planning process and after plan adoption.
* Location-specific focus on targeted areas: at least three (3) major meetings – these meetings will include key stakeholders/community leaders as well as a significant planning charrette for all residents to attend. The consultant is expected to lead the public outreach with the assistance of the staff.

**Contact Information and Guidance for Consultants**

The City requests that each respondent submit seven (7) original and one (1) digital copy (email or flash drive) in a pdf format of a letter of interest and statement of qualifications. Respondents may deliver this information to the address below, postmarked no later than April 25th, 2018.

The response to the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) should be brief but comprehensive and shall include experiences related to the team’s ability to achieve the city’s project goals.

Responses should include the following:

1. Letter of Interest: Describe how the firm would be an asset for the City of Pine Bluff. Demonstrate an understanding of the City of Pine Bluff and the project scope.
2. Project Approach and Scope of Work: A description of how the consultant will address each of the Expected Characteristics and how to provide public engagement. A statement regarding any special or unique resources available to the consultant that would enhance its ability to successfully complete this project. Any other information that may demonstrate a superior approach is encouraged.
3. Project Timeline: Timetable for the entire project that also includes major milestones and anticipated consultant participation for each project component.
4. Project Team: A description of the project team, including background information of all principals and their proposed level of involvement for the plan
5. Project Experience: Examples of similar projects that have been accomplished by the consultant, with emphasis upon project quality and timelines of performance.
6. References: Reference of at least three (3) past or current municipal clients.
7. Visuals: Which the consultant feels would be appropriate in consideration of the proposal by the selection committee are encouraged and welcomed

**Evaluation Criteria**

Below are the criteria with which each proposal will be evaluated, and the weight offered to each element

* Consultant team – Preference will be given to team who have extensive comprehensive plan experience. 25%
* Project Proposal – Proposals that thoroughly address each of the issues identified in the “Expected Plan Characteristics” section and offer superior approach to this project will be given preference. 25%
* Project Timing – Proposals that provide a realistic timeframe for work to be completed. The goal for this project is to have all work on the comprehensive finished by March of 2019 and ready to move forward with the formal adoption process. The land use regulations should be completed by December 2019. 20%
* References – Preference will be given to references from other municipalities, particularly ones in Arkansas. 10%
* Unique Team Attributes or Experience. 10%
* Work Product – Examples of successfully completed comprehensive plans are to be submitted. 10%

Questions regarding this RFQ may be directed to Larry Reynolds, Director of SEARPC at (870) 534-4247 or larryreynolds@cablelynx.com.

Proposals should be submitted to:

Larry Reynolds

Director of Southeast Arkansas Regional Planning Commission

1300 Ohio Street, Suite B.

Pine Bluff, Arkansas 71601

Phone: 870-534-4247

[www.searpc.com](http://www.searpc.com)