



---

Office of Purchasing/Contracting      324 W. Evans Street      Florence, South Carolina 29501

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS NO. 2025-01  
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES TO UPDATE THE  
CITY OF FLORENCE NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION STRATEGY  
SUBMISSION DEADLINE: February 4, 2025 2:00 pm**

**PURPOSE OF THE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

The City of Florence, South Carolina (the City) is soliciting proposals from qualified consulting firms to assist the City in the update and further development of its Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy. The original plan was adopted in 2014 with the goal of comprehensive revitalization within three historic neighborhoods adjacent to the City’s downtown: North Florence, Historic West Florence, and East Florence. These three neighborhoods are characterized by historic disinvestment, and until recent revitalization efforts, little to no infill or new construction. The selected proposal will provide the City with an assessment of existing conditions within the neighborhoods, an evaluation of current and past revitalization efforts, and a guide to further implement neighborhood revitalization. This guide is expected to incorporate neighborhood feedback, relevant data, observations, and modern planning principles to generate a comprehensive strategy for continued implementation of revitalization efforts. Responses should be submitted based on the information and guidelines provided in this Request for Proposals (RFP).

This RFP is being publicly advertised. The City will make the selection based on the responses submitted, interviews with firms, and then negotiate a final agreement with the selected firm. Responders are welcome to establish consortiums or teams of firms in connection with this RFP. The final selection of the firm will be based on the criteria set forth in this RFP.

All responses must be sealed and have **“RFP 2025-01 Request for Proposals for Professional Services to update the Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy”** clearly marked on the outside for ease of identification by the City. Responses may be hand-delivered prior to the submission deadline at the address listed above. The City does not accept electronic/emailed responses. Directions may be obtained by calling (843) 665-3165. Any response received later than the submission deadline **WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED OR CONSIDERED.**

Responses submitted by mail should be addressed to: **City of Florence, Attn: Lynwood F. Givens, Purchasing Agent, 324 W. Evans Street, Florence, SC 29501.** The City will not be responsible for late submission caused by the postal service, other carriers, or any other delivery problems regardless of the reason.

This solicitation does not commit the City of Florence to award a contract, to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a response, or to procure or contract for services. The City of Florence reserves the right to accept or reject any or all submissions received as a result of this Request for Proposals, or to cancel it in part or in its entirety if it is in the best interest of the City of Florence.

Lynwood F. Givens  
Purchasing Agent

## MINORITY AND WOMAN OWNED BUSINESS

Minority Business Owners (minority or woman owned businesses) will be afforded full opportunity to submit a response to the Request for Proposals and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, creed, sex, or national origin in consideration for an award. It is the policy of the City that minority business and women owned business enterprises (MBE/WBE) have an opportunity to participate at all levels of contracting in the performance of City contracts to the extent practical and consistent with the efficient performance of the contract. Please indicate that you are a minority or woman owned business with your proposal submission.

The successful contractor(s) must ensure that all subcontractors, agents, personnel assigned by or employees of prime company and subcontractors are not discriminated against because of their race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. The successful contractor(s) must make positive efforts to provide equal employment opportunity for minority and women owned businesses.

All submitted materials shall become the sole property of the City of Florence. Contractors will relinquish claim for return of submitted material. The City shall have sole discretion in evaluating the responses. The City reserves the right to reject any and all responses and is not bound to accept any response if it is contrary to the best interest of the City.

## INSTRUCTIONS

Responses to the Request for Proposals will only be accepted from responsible and responsive companies that have an established reputation in the field of history, architecture, architectural history, or historic preservation, as well as demonstrated experience creating design guidelines and experience working with local design review boards and commissions.

No response may be withdrawn for a period of ninety (90) days after the submission date.

A responsive company is defined as one that has the capability in all respects to perform fully the requirements mentioned in the RFP document and the integrity and reliability which will assure good faith performance.

A responsive company is defined as one that has submitted a response which conforms in all respects to the RFP requirements.

**Protest Period:** Any actual or prospective company that is aggrieved in connection with the solicitation or award of a contract/purchase order may formally protest in writing to the Chief Financial Officer. The protest may be submitted at any time during the procurement process. However, if a prospective company wishes to protest, the formal protest must be submitted in writing and must be received by the City no later than seven (7) days from the date that the aggrieved actual or prospective company has been informed of the proposal results by the Purchasing Agent. Protests received by the City after the expiration of the seven (7) day protest period will not be considered by the City.

**Disputes:** In cases of disputes as to whether or not an item or service quoted or delivered meets the scope of work, the decision of the City of Florence shall be final and binding on all parties. The Purchasing Agent may request in writing the recommendation of the head of the department of the end user or other objective sources.

**Deviations:** Any deviations from the scope of services contained herein must be stated in the response for the City of Florence's consideration.

**Changes:** Any changes in this Request for Proposal after a contract agreement has been awarded must be with the written consent of the Purchasing Agent or the City Manager; otherwise, the responsibility for such changes lies with the company. Any changes to the scope of services in this Request for Proposals package shall be in writing and an addendum will go out to all prospective respondents so each respondent can compete equitably.

**Ownership Of Material:** Ownership of all data, material and documentation originated and prepared for the City of Florence pursuant to this contract shall belong exclusively to the City of Florence.

**QUESTIONS AND INQUIRIES:** The deadline for the submission of any and all questions and inquiries concerning this RFP is January 28, 2025 at 5:00 pm. All questions must be directed to Lynwood F. Givens, Purchasing Agent in written format and e-mailed to [lgivens@cityofflorence.com](mailto:lgivens@cityofflorence.com).

A complete copy of the City of Florence Purchasing Policies and Procedures Manual can be downloaded from the City of Florence website at [www.cityofflorence.com](http://www.cityofflorence.com).

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

**City Background:** The City of Florence is located in the northeast corner of South Carolina at the intersection of Interstates 95 and 20 in an eight-county region referred to as the Pee Dee, the name of the first Native American inhabitants of the area. The City of Florence is the county seat and largest city in Florence County, with a population of 40,072. The metropolitan area has a population of approximately 200,000 and is the retail and employment hub for the Pee Dee Region. The City has had great success with the revitalization of its downtown commercial districts through both public and private investment.

Prior to the adoption of the 2014 Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy, little to no new development was conducted within the three target neighborhoods. Since implementation of the Strategy, the City has successfully constructed 25 homes and worked with private developers to construct an additional 13 homes, all single-family detached and homeowner occupied. Additionally, over 40 dilapidated structures have been demolished and 30 properties have been renovated/weatherized through CDBG and City programs. The City has implemented a Rental Registry Program and is currently pursuing the adoption of both a vacant and abandoned buildings policy and an unfit dwellings policy.

**Introduction:** The general purpose of the update to the Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy is to provide guidance for the continuation and expansion of the City's revitalization efforts within three historic neighborhoods adjacent to the City's downtown: North Florence, Historic West Florence, and East Florence. A Neighborhood Action Plan was adopted in 2013 and included recommended strategies and implementable items largely based upon input from neighborhood residents. This plan was greatly expanded upon through the Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy adopted in 2014, which provided specific objectives for development, policy recommendations, leadership, and marketing. These plans initiated significant City investment in the form of new home construction; existing home rehabilitation; road, streetscape, and stormwater improvements; reinvestment into parks and community centers; as well as supportive policies and programs such as a rental registry, a home demolition program, and a down payment assistance program.

These plans can be found at the following links:

Neighborhood Action Plan:

<https://www.cityofflorence.com/sites/default/files/uploads/Residents/neighborhood-improvement/neighborhood-action-plan-final-report-.pdf>

Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy:

[https://www.cityofflorence.com/sites/default/files/uploads/neighborhood\\_revitalization\\_plan.pdf](https://www.cityofflorence.com/sites/default/files/uploads/neighborhood_revitalization_plan.pdf)

The selected firm will provide the City with an assessment of existing conditions within the neighborhoods, an evaluation of current and past revitalization efforts, and a guide to further implement neighborhood revitalization. This guide is expected to incorporate neighborhood feedback, relevant data, observations, and modern planning principles to generate a comprehensive strategy for continued implementation of revitalization efforts.

**Planning Approach:** A response to this RFP shall include the respondent's proposed methodology and approach, including a general timeline for developing a strategy and implementation schedule for the neighborhood revitalization effort. The approach should be:

- A. Innovative and unique to Florence;

- B. One that balances the interests of all parties with a stake in the future of Florence and the disenfranchised neighborhoods;
- C. Educational to the public and development community on best practices on what comparable communities have in place;
- D. One that incorporates work completed on other related strategies;
- E. One that provides for diversified public involvement in the drafting process;
- F. One that provides insight for neighborhood planning principles; and
- G. One that proposes a comprehensive approach to revitalization realizing that a singular solution will not be sufficient for success.

**Successful Respondents Characteristics:** Successful respondents to this RFP will demonstrate that they possess the following characteristics:

- A. Demonstrate success rate of adoption of plans created in the last five years. Please make specific reference to and your involvement with the plans.
- B. Identify specific plans that demonstrate your firm's experience in developing unique neighborhood plans and revitalization strategies for declining neighborhoods. As stated above, Florence would like a strategy written specifically for our neighborhoods. Make reference to plans whereby you have been able to produce win-win solutions for communities such as ours based on your knowledge of Florence.
- C. Demonstrate your proven track record and explain your methodology and philosophy in educating the public and elected officials on the value of comprehensive neighborhood planning/revitalization.
- D. Reference plans where your firm has demonstrated an awareness of the economic, social and environmental consequences of future urban and suburban development.
- E. Reference plans/strategies where you have worked with disenfranchised neighborhoods/communities and how you addressed their needs, identified the causes of their degenerated state and recommendations for revitalization.
- F. Specifically reference plans where you have addressed full scale revitalization efforts. It will not be sufficient to simply reference plans/strategies that incorporated components such as housing, land use, parks et cetera. You must demonstrate your capabilities to perform a holistic approach.

**Scope of Services:** The goal of the work to be performed is to build upon the City's existing Neighborhood Revitalization Program and provide a comprehensive guide for future revitalization specific to the three target neighborhoods. The following is a list if tasks inclusive, but not exhaustive, to accomplishing this goal:

- A. The Consultant will focus on analyzing data and gathering input from City staff, leadership, partners, and field data related to housing supply, housing demand, housing conditions and neighborhood revitalization activities and provide an evaluation of the current conditions and past revitalization efforts.
- B. The Consultant will include an evaluation of the exterior condition of each single-family detached unit within the target neighborhoods. City staff can assist with this task.
- C. The Consultant will engage residents and stakeholders throughout the process and identify the roles of the City and neighborhood association in addressing neighborhood needs. City staff will work with the consultant to facilitate meetings and identify stakeholders.
- D. The Consultant will identify capital improvement projects that could be implemented to spur neighborhood node and corridor revitalization.
- E. The Consultant will identify programs and partnerships the City is lacking to further develop the neighborhood revitalization program.
- F. The Consultant will identify programs, code enforcement policies, code changes, or other such changes that would further revitalization efforts.

- G. The Consultant will identify sources of funding for revitalization efforts to include guidance on where to most effectively focus the City's limited financial and administrative resources to achieve the greatest impact.
- H. The Consultant will provide detailed recommendations and strategies to direct future revitalization efforts and identify lead and partner organizations to implement action items.
- I. The City is currently hiring a firm to conduct a citywide housing and needs assessment study. The Consultant selected to update the Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy may be asked to work with this firm or utilize data provided by this study to provide a more complete analysis of the three target neighborhoods.

### **Final Document and Presentation to Stakeholders**

Deliverable: The Consultant shall provide 10 paper copies and 1 electronic copy of: the updated Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy and an electronic copy of the Power Point presentation(s), an electronic copy of all GIS shape files and maps, and other presentation materials.

### **PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE (MANDATORY)**

The City will host a mandatory Pre-Proposal Conference at 324 W Evans Street, Florence, SC. This will be conducted on January 22, 2025 at 10:00 am. Virtual attendance will be permitted, and a link will be provided upon request. Responders to the Request for Proposals are required to attend the pre-proposal conference and are encouraged to have questions prepared prior to the meeting. For questions regarding the pre-proposal conference please contact The City of Florence Procurement Officer, Mr. Lynwood Givens, at 843-665- 3165 or by email to [lgivens@cityofflorence.com](mailto:lgivens@cityofflorence.com).

### **CONTENT OF PROPOSALS**

Proposals shall include the following information:

1. Title Page  
List the RFP subject, the name of the firm, address, telephone number, name of contact person and the date.
2. Letter of Transmittal  
Make a positive commitment to perform the required work within the time period. Also give the name(s) of the person(s) who will be authorized to represent the firm, their title, and telephone number.
3. Qualifications
  - a. Name, address and telephone number of the firm's owners, and full information about the corporate structure of the submitting firm.
  - b. Location of the firm's primary place of business for legal purposes and any subsidiary offices, years of business, and types of services offered.
  - c. Names and qualifications of personnel to be assigned to the project.
4. Description of similar project experience and the names, addresses, and telephone number of owners for all projects described (references will be checked).
5. Curriculum vitae of principal associates and key personnel proposed to have primary responsibility for the project.
6. Current and projected workload, including a list of all projects contracted for or anticipated.
7. Approach  
Indicate your understanding of the scope of work by describing your firm's approach and characteristics, including specific illustrations of the procedures to be followed. Tell us about your

firm's experience, background, staff capabilities, and examples of work, where your work will actually take place and why the City should hire your firm.

8. Project History and References

- a. Provide complete project history for minimum of four (4) projects from the consultant which meets the minimum qualification requirements. These projects will be considered in evaluating the qualifications. The information must include:
- b. Project name and location  
Name, address, and telephone number for project owner, owner's project manager, and/or owner's contact person on the project.
- c. Description of the project including:
  - i. Type of project
  - ii. Initial project budget
  - iii. Initial project schedule
- d. Role and listing of services provided by team member
- e. Name, title and role of personnel used to perform services
- f. Project design and delivery method used
- g. Project state and completion dates
- h. Proposed contract fees shall be submitted containing a schedule of the estimated man-hours required and are to be broken down by type of personnel to be used for the proposed services.
- i. Breakdowns are to be shown separately for each item listed under "Scope of Work". Overhead factors and other multipliers shall be identified.
- j. The consultant shall be responsible for all required resources to include but not limited to computers, surveys, outside consultants, etc.
- k. While cost will not be the sole determining factor, cost will be considered. **Please submit one copy of your cost proposal in a separate envelope, clearly marked.**

**EVALUATION PROCEDURE**

The City of Florence will review and evaluate proposals based on the following factors:

1. Proposal's ability to meet the purpose and intent of the Study
2. Firm's experience with similar projects and experience of personnel assigned to this Study
3. Prior CDBG experience
4. Quality and completeness of past projects
5. Ability to complete all tasks within the allotted time
6. Presentation skills
7. Cost of services not to exceed price and cost effectiveness of proposal
8. Proposal is in the best interest of the City of Florence

The evaluation scoring system is outlined below.

1. Consultant's understanding and approach to the City's required tasks and needs as demonstrated in the Consultant's response to the scope of services. (25 points)
2. Consultant's experience with similar projects comparable in type, size, and complexity. (25 points)

3. Qualifications of the Consultant's staff assigned to perform the work with this project. (25 points)
4. Demonstrated ability of the Consultant to perform high quality work, to control costs, and meet project schedules. (20 points)
5. Consultant's past performance on projects with the City. (5 points)

**Right to Reject Responses, Waive Irregularities, and Conduct Ex Parte Communications with Contractors:** The City reserves the right to accept or reject any and all responses, at its sole discretion, received as a result of this RFP, to waive minor irregularities, and to conduct discussions with any or all prospective applicants, in any manner necessary to secure helpful information.

**Right to Request Additional Information from Any or All Responders:** The City reserves the right to request additional information from any or all prospective applicants, if necessary, to clarify that which is contained in the proposals.

Responders are requested to submit five (5) copies of the proposal. Due to time limitations of the Selection Committee members, responses should be limited to no longer than fifteen (15) single-sided pages. Please include tab dividers for easy access to each section of the proposal (tab dividers do not count toward the 15-page limit). Additional supplemental information may be submitted, under separate cover, in order to aid in firm selection. This information may include staff resumes, descriptions of similar municipal projects, project references, etc.

## **SELECTION PROCESS**

The City has formed a Selection Committee to review the proposals and recommend a firm. The Selection Committee will be composed of the following members:

1. Planning Director
2. Community Services Manager
3. Assistant City Manager
4. Utility Planning and Economic Development Director
5. Purchasing Agent

Any questions regarding this RFP should be addressed to the Purchasing Agent, Lynwood F. Givens in writing to [lgivens@cityofflorence.com](mailto:lgivens@cityofflorence.com). Please do not attempt to contact members of the Selection Committee.

The Selection Committee will review all responses in accordance with the Evaluation Criteria outlined herein and make a final selection. All submissions must conform to this RFP. The Selection Committee reserves the right to interview any or all of the respondents if it is determined to be in the best interest of the City.

The submissions will be evaluated based on organization, completeness, and sufficiency of information requested throughout the submission. The factors for award directly correspond to the RFP requirements as previously outlined and have been assigned a point value.

Based upon its review of the evaluation and selection criteria itemized in the content of the proposals section, above, the Selection Committee may short-list three firms deemed to be best suited to the needs of the City. If selected, these three firms will then be interviewed by the committee. During the interview process, the short-listed firms will be given the opportunity to discuss anticipated methods and their approach for furnishing the required services, and to seek further clarification of the project elements.

Based on the proposals and interviews with the short-listed firms, the Selection Committee will select one firm for contract negotiation. Based upon the firm's price proposal, the Committee will attempt to negotiate a scope of services and contract price that is satisfactory to the City and firm. Upon completion of the negotiations, the committee will make its recommendation to the City Manager.

**The City shall have sole discretion in evaluating the responses and the suitability of the responder to meet the City's needs. The City reserves the right to select the response or responses deemed to be in the best interest of the City. The City also reserves the right to reject any and all responses.**



## **BUSINESS LICENSE REQUIREMENT**

**Entities that provide goods and services within the City limits are required to have a business license. The successful contractor/company will be required to contact the Business License Office, 324 West Evans Florence, SC 29501 prior to commencement of work. The Business License Office's phone number is (843) 665-3173 and the fax number is (843) 665-3171. The City's business license application can be viewed at the following URL:**

<https://www.cityofflorence.com/business-licenses>

## **TAXES**

The City of Florence pays SC Sales Taxes in the amount of 8%. However, the City of Florence is exempt from Federal Excise Taxes and will issue exemption certificates, if requested. **Include all taxes with your response.**

## **PROFESSIONAL INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS AND INDEMNIFICATION**

The successful company shall procure and maintain insurance for protection from claims under workers' compensations acts; claims for damages because of bodily injury including personal injury, sickness or disease, or death of any and all employees or of any person other than such employees; claims for damages because of injury to or destruction of property, including loss of use resulting therefrom; claims caused by professional errors, acts, or omission; and any other insurance prescribed by law. The successful company shall name the City of Florence, South Carolina, its elected and appointed officials, officers, and employees "Additional Insureds" as their interests may appear but only with respect to services performed or provided by successful company on behalf of the City under Consultant's commercial general liability insurance policy. The successful company shall, within 10 days of the full execution of any contract resulting from this RFP, provide the City's Purchasing Agent with a certificate(s) of insurance evidencing the coverages required above and containing an endorsement to the effect that any cancellation or non-renewal shall not be until 10 days after the insurer or the selected company gives written notice to the City.

Without limiting the provisions of paragraph above, the selected company shall, during the term of any contract with the City, purchase and maintain insurance with limits not less than those set forth below.

The successful company shall take out and maintain, during the life of the contract agreement, workers' compensation and employer's liability insurance for all employees to be engaged in services on this project under this agreement in an amount not less than \$1,000,000.00, and in case any such services are sublet, the company shall require all subcontractor(s) also to provide workers' compensation and employer's liability insurance in an amount not less than \$1,000,000.00 for all of the subcontractor's employees to be engaged in such.

- Employer's Liability Insurance - \$1,000,000 each accident, \$1,000,000 disease policy limit, \$1,000,000 disease each employee
- Commercial General Liability Insurance - \$1,000,000 per occurrence (bodily injury and property damage) / \$1,000,000 general aggregate
- Automobile Liability Insurance - \$1,000,000 combined single limit (bodily injury and property damage), each accident
- Professional Liability Insurance - \$1,000,000 per claim / \$1,000,000 general aggregate

**Professional Services:** The selected company shall indemnify and hold the City of Florence, South Carolina, its elected and appointed officials, officers, and employees, harmless from and against judgments, liabilities, damages, losses, costs, and expenses (including, but not limited to, reasonable attorneys' fees and costs but only to the extent otherwise authorized by law) to the extent caused by any negligent act, error, or



omission in the performance and furnishing of the selected company's professional services under any contract resulting from this RFP, including any negligent act, error or omission of any individual or entity directly or indirectly employed by the selected company to perform any of the work or anyone for whose acts, errors, or omissions the selected company may be liable, regardless of whether or not caused in part by a party indemnified hereunder.

**Other Than Professional Services:** With respect to all acts or omissions of the selected company, or any individual or entity directly or indirectly employed by the selected company to perform any of the work, or anyone for whose acts, errors, or omissions the selected company may be liable, which do not arise out of or result from the performance of professional services, and which may be covered by employer's liability insurance, commercial general liability insurance, automobile liability insurance, or other general liability insurance, the selected company shall indemnify and hold the City of Florence, South Carolina, its elected and appointed officials, officers, and employees, harmless from and against judgments, liabilities, damages, losses, costs, and expenses (including, but not limited to, reasonable attorneys' fees and costs but only to the extent otherwise authorized by law) to the extent caused by or arising out of the selected company's negligent acts of commission or omission (or those of or any individual or entity directly or indirectly employed by the selected company to perform any of the work or anyone for whose actions or failure to act the selected company may be liable) during the performance of this Agreement.

The selected company shall require any subconsultants and subcontractors to purchase and maintain insurance with limits not less than those required above to be purchased and maintained by the selected company. In addition, the selected company shall require any subconsultants and subcontractors to assume the selected company's indemnification obligations under any contract resulting from this RFQ to the extent they relate to the subconsultant's or subcontractor's obligations under any contract with the selected company.



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS NO. 2025-01**

**Contact Information**

The following form should be completed and submitted with your proposal.

**Company Name:**

**Address:**

**City, State, Zip:**

**Phone Number:**

**Fax Number:**

**E-mail Address:**

**Printed Name of Authorized Agent:**

**Title:**

**Date:**