



Diane Nichols Tradd
Assistant City Manager/DPD Director

Craig Thomas
Deputy Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: Eileen M. Donoghue, City Manager *EMD*
FROM: Diane N. Tradd, Assistant City Manager/DPD Director
DATE: February 9, 2021
SUBJECT: INFORMATIONAL – Traffic/Transportation Motions

The Transportation Engineer position at the City of Lowell has remained vacant since a staff departure in the fall of 2020. The City posted the vacancy twice this fall and received five (5) total applications. Even though the experience requirements were reduced between the two postings, none of the five applicants met the minimum experience requirements. Based upon the very limited applications received, which may have been due to a massive hiring push this fall by the MBTA, City staff determined that the best approach to fill the vacant position was to repost as “Open until filled” in 2021.

The position has now been reposted and the City Human Relations department has worked hard to post the job with seven (7) different industry groups when 1-3 is typical. In addition, at least four (4) of the postings are with new entities including the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers and National Society of Black Engineers. Although applications continue to be slow, several recent applicants meet the minimum requirements and screening interviews are starting next week.

During this period of prolonged vacancy of a critical staff position, several City Council motions remain unanswered. Although the City employs an Assistant Transportation Engineer, six (6) open City Council motions issued since that departure require consultant support for additional time and/or technical knowledge. The Department of Planning and Development (DPD), in coordination with the Department of Public Works and the City Engineer, just issued a request for responses to consulting firms with experience in Lowell and a strong history of traffic/transportation project management. The solicitation is attached to this Informational Memo. DPD proposes to utilize a portion of the unexpended salary for the Transportation Engineer, which may require a transfer vote with the Council, to pay the selected firm until the hiring process is complete for a new Transportation Engineer. We expect the outstanding motions listed in the consultant’s scope of work to be complete by April.

CRT/ns

Attachment

cc: Christine Clancy, P.E., Public Works Commissioner
Ting Chang, P.E., City Engineer
Alan Heredia, Assistant Transportation Engineer



REQUEST FOR RESPONSES

Diane Nichols Tradd
Assistant City Manager/DPD Director

Craig Thomas
Deputy Director

TO: Selected Firms (distributed via email)
FROM: Craig Thomas, Deputy Director, DPD
DATE: February 5, 2021

This request for responses is issued to procure traffic engineering professional services to respond to a group of information requests from the Lowell City Council. This solicitation contains details and timelines for submission of responses for this project. Although these services are exempt from the state's procurement rules in MGL Ch. 30B, the City seeks competition for price and approach to the scope of work. All interested firms are required to respond by email to me on or before Friday, February 19th at 11:30 AM.

Scope of Work

Lowell's City Councilors principally request information and updates from City staff through the Council motion process. City Councilors submit motions during public meetings and responses are assigned to the appropriate staff member—based on experience, licensure and/or capacity—for a timely response. The Transportation Engineer position at the City of Lowell has remained vacant since a staff departure in the fall of 2020. Although the City employs an Assistant Transportation Engineer, several City Council motions issued since that departure require consultant support for additional time and/or technical knowledge. This solicitation is issued to procure professional services for the following scope of work:

1. Respond to the Council motions listed below. Attachment A includes two Council motion responses from the prior Transportation Engineer that define the expected amount of information and detail expected in response to each of the following six (6) motions:
 - a. Request City Manager have proper department review pedestrian safety along Branch Street business corridor; indicating if signage/crosswalk will improve safety in the area.
 - b. Request City Manager direct DPD/Transportation Engineer to develop protocol/policy for citizens' concerns and complaints regarding traffic issues in the City.
 - i. Note: The former Transportation Engineer drafted a policy prior to leaving the position. It is included as Attachment B. Respondents should propose an appropriate amount of work to review and update, as may be needed.
 - c. Request City Manager investigate the addition of a left turning arrow traveling inbound from Chelmsford Street onto Plain Street (at J. Poitras Shoe Company) and repaint all crosswalks at this 3-street intersection.
 - d. Request City Manager investigate the addition of a left turning arrow traveling outbound from Chelmsford Street (at the 99 Restaurant) onto Industrial Avenue.
 - e. Request City Manager have Transportation Engineer poll the residents on Corbett Street to see if there is interest in making Corbett Street one-way from Gorham Street to Stromquist Avenue.
 - i. Note: Respondents should propose a plan that could reach all impacted residences through a variety of outreach methods. In addition, a meeting to discuss best practices for this type of outreach with City staff should be included.
 - f. Request City Manager have proper department conduct a study and review to address the concerns causing serious traffic issues for Wentworth Avenue.
2. Costs should include attendance at three (3) public meetings with Lowell City Council that will last 2 hours.

3. Consultants should also provide an hourly cost proposal for staff members for an undefined work package of \$5,000 for additional motion responses. The City plans to use this as a “house doctor” structure to answer City Council motions moving forward until a Transportation Engineer is hired.

Consultants should be aware that 50% of the award criteria will be based upon the thoughtfulness and likelihood to succeed of their response to the scope of work, as determined by the City of Lowell staff.

Responses

All responses must be a no more than two pages and respond to the following minimum criteria:

1. Identified lead project manager has more than 10 years’ experience with traffic/transportation engineering in Massachusetts cities with populations larger than 50,000;
2. Project staff can demonstrate completion of a similar staff support contract for a municipality; and
3. Delivery of six (6) motion responses will occur no later than April 16th. The anticipated start date is March 8, 2021.

Cost will be 50% of the award criteria, although similarly priced proposals as determined by the City of Lowell may be scored equally.

A signed Affidavit of non-collusion is required and does not count as part of the two-page submission. This is included as Attachment 3.

Award Criteria

This solicitation is provided to a pre-selected group of 3 firms. As noted above, the response to the scope of work and cost proposal are each 50% of the award criteria. All respondents will price item #3 under “Scope of Work” as \$5,000 for the full proposal cost.

Attachments

There are three (3) attachments to this notification that provide additional information about the project. The attachments continue on the next page as described below:

1. Two (2) example Council motion responses on similar topics (Westford/Foster and Andover);
2. Draft citizen concern/complaint policy; and
3. Affidavit of non-collusion.