



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Creation of Staff
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging
Comprehensive Program
(Including Evaluation, Creation of Program,
Ongoing Training, and Cultural Integration)

Date Issued: October 25, 2023

Due Date: November 15, 2023

A. PROJECT OVERVIEW

The City of Walnut Creek seeks qualified consultants to submit proposals to assist Human Resources in the planning, creation, and integration of a fully comprehensive Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) program. Beginning with a full assessment of the current status of the organization's employee culture, the selected professional(s) will assist the City in bridging the gap between work already completed/underway and the organization's goal to strengthen and broaden the roots of this work within its culture.

B. BACKGROUND

In 2020, the City of Walnut Creek requested proposals for skilled leadership and support with evaluation and training of all City staff on the topics of Diversity, Inclusion, and Implicit Bias. Concurrently, the City collected interested employees' applications to create a diverse internal employee working group (later self-entitled *Rising TIDE* – Toward Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity). The City's vision is to build upon this important foundation to provide employees with an inclusive organizational culture which embraces and celebrates all differences.

C. SCOPE OF SERVICES

Although the following is representative of the scope of services the City is seeking to carry forth, the City will review proposals containing other duties of a similar nature based on the proposer's area of subject matter expertise.

The successful proposer will provide services for the following components.

1. Evaluation of current staff culture:

- While a survey was conducted in 2021, it would be appropriate to collect new data to determine what areas have changed, if any. The City will also review recommendations of areas to be surveyed, based on the proposer's expertise.
- Data will be collected, analyzed, and presented to the City Manager and the Executive Leadership Team. Data should inform additional action to be taken, such as selecting advised areas of training.

2. Drafting of a comprehensive DEIB Program (including creation of a formal Welcoming Ordinance):
 - It is the City’s goal to have a comprehensive program outlined and available for all employees to access independently. This program is a compilation of updated and applicable policies, a hub for internal dialogue, a training and education toolkit, and a cultural celebration center. This program should be formed with “room to grow” as the organization builds upon this work.
3. Bridging previous work with ongoing program goals:
 - Groups of employees among multiple departments have led both dialogue and concrete changes, ultimately forming a more inclusive place to work and increasing awareness around these sensitive topics. In order to strengthen and foster growth within these roots, the City needs to connect groups with each other, work to engage all employees, and build or enhance trust between departments. The proposer will provide a bridge to groups in connecting to find shared goals and foster open lines of communication, specifically between Human Resources and Rising TIDE.
 - The City aims to review proposals for expertise in this area.
4. Ongoing training, including orientation of new staff:
 - All City employees completed a three (3) hour, foundational training on the topics of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Implicit Bias. The City aims to continue and deepen the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging dialogue by providing two or three additional trainings for all staff and establishing a baseline training for all incoming staff. These trainings will include Executive Leadership, City Council, and Commissions.
5. Recommendations for program sustainability:
 - Employees join the City from a wide spectrum of thought based on their own lived experiences. Recognizing this reality, it is important that all employees understand the City’s mission to fold DEIB principles into the established core values of respect, integrity, excellence, teamwork, and creativity. In order to continue to build a sustainable culture of inclusivity and open-mindedness, and to establish celebration of differences, the City needs to include this work in our everyday practices. The City welcomes creative and proven solutions to ensure this work has a lasting impact, maintains momentum, and is sustainable.

D. ELIGIBILITY

The City intends to contract with a provider made up of a diverse team with demonstrated experience in:

- Change management principles and best practices,
- Working with municipal and/or government agencies—including sworn and non-sworn personnel—around culturally sensitive topics,

- Engaging with empathy and delicacy regarding sensitive subject matters,
- The use of evaluation tools to assess the cultural status of an organization as well as the impact of educational/training experiences,
- Working with project leaders in developing training content,
- Facilitating a bridge between Human Resources and Rising TIDE for optimal program effectiveness, and
- Development of draft comprehensive DEIB programs and Strategic Action Plans.

E. PROPOSAL CONTENT AND SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Proposals must be less than 35 pages in length, including a project plan which outlines the philosophy and manner in which the consultant intends to carry out the services previously outlined. Acceptable outlines will include sections which explicitly highlight the scopes of services outlined in section C of this Request for Proposal(s) announcement.

In addition, proposals must delineate the following:

- I. The associated timeline,
- II. Pricing plan, including the proposed payment terms and timeline of amounts due,
- III. A description of the providers’ credentials, and
- IV. Examples/evidence of similar services provided for at least two (2) organizations of similar size and context, including reference contacts.

Any questions regarding this Request for Proposal(s) must be sent to Kathryn Tunney at tunney@walnut-creek.org by Wednesday, November 1, 2023 at 5:00 p.m. An answer to any questions received will be returned no later than Monday, November 6, 2023.

A digital copy of the proposal packet must be sent via email to Kathryn M. Tunney (Human Resources Analyst) at tunney@walnut-creek.org by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, November 15, 2023. The email’s subject line must contain the words “Request for Proposal”. Submissions received after November 15, 2023 at 5:00 p.m. will not be reviewed and/or considered valid.

Hard copies and electronic versions via USB drives are also acceptable and should be delivered to:

Kathryn M. Tunney
 City of Walnut Creek
 Human Resources
 1666 N. Main Street
 Walnut Creek, CA 94596

F. SELECTION PROCESS

- I. Minimum Qualification Review:

All organizations that submit materials for review will receive confirmation of receipt. An initial review of all submissions will be completed to confirm that the criteria delineated in section E of this Request for Proposal(s) are met. If any element of this requested content is not included therein, the City reserves the right not to advance the proposal to the next stage of the selection process.

II. Formal Proposal Review and Scoring Criteria:

Submissions will be reviewed and scored by a panel comprised of no fewer than two (2) representatives of the City. Top submissions whose materials are considered most directly in alignment with the review criteria will be notified by a City representative. The following criteria will be used in review (points are out of 50):

- 10 points possible: Scope of services to be provided, in association to pricing plan, (relating to section C) align with the City’s mission, vision, values, and Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging goals.
- 10 points possible: All elements of section E are present and provide adequate depth of information to inform comprehensive understanding of the proposal.
- 10 points possible: Experience is shown working with sworn personnel, in the City government space, and/or having worked locally to the Walnut Creek, California area.
- 20 points possible: Experience, skills, credentials, and work product shown represents an appropriate base of knowledge and abilities that are scaled to the City of Walnut Creek’s needs.

III. Based on the outcome of this review (resulting in the average of scores provided by both/all reviewers), the City may require additional information or testing as deemed necessary, including but not limited to interviews with City representatives (either via Zoom or in person), and reference checks.

IV. Placement on the pre-qualified list does not guarantee the associated proposer is awarded a service contract. Contracts will be assigned based on alignment between the proposer’s qualifications and the results of interviews.

G. TENTATIVE PROJECT TIMELINE

Milestone	Associated Date
Release of RFP	October 25, 2023
Proposal Due Date	November 15, 2023 at 5:00 p.m.
Proposal Review Completion	November 27, 2023
Interviews with City Representatives	December 1, 2023
Final Selection and Contract Drafted	December 8, 2023
Final Contract Signed and Timelines Established	December 15, 2023
Project Work Begins	January 3, 2024

H. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

1. All costs for preparing or responding to the proposal in response to this RFP are solely the responsibility of the proposer and shall not be reimbursed in any manner by the City.
2. A proposer may withdraw and resubmit a proposal prior to the proposal submission deadline. No re-submissions will be allowed after the submission deadline.
3. The selected proposer is required to provide a valid City of Walnut Creek business license number prior to contract approval.
4. Proposals and materials produced by the selected proposer in the course and scope of this engagement shall become property of the City of Walnut Creek once received by the City.
5. Changes to the selected proposer's project personnel shall not be allowed without prior written approval by the City.
6. Pursuant to the California Public Records Act (California Government Code Section 6250 et. seq.), public records may be inspected and examined by anyone desiring to do so. All submitted proposals are considered public records subject to disclosure.
7. The City does not make representation that an agreement will be awarded to any party making a submittal. The City is not liable for any costs incurred by the proposers related to the preparation of their proposal or in any other aspect of their consideration for this engagement.
8. The City reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to alter, amend, modify, or cancel this solicitation at any time, including the modification of the deadlines and schedule and/or the scope of work, or to withdraw this solicitation, in whole or in part, at any time prior to the award of a contract pursuant hereto.
9. The City reserves the right to reject any proposals that are deemed to be unresponsive, reject all proposals, in whole or in part, or to otherwise cancel this RFP, in whole or in part. The City reserves the right to request clarification of any proposal term from proposers.
10. The City may contact the references provided; contact any proposer to clarify any response; contact any current users of a proposer's services; solicit information from any available source concerning any aspect of a proposal; and seek and review any other information deemed pertinent to the evaluation process. The City reserves the right to waive informalities and minor irregularities in proposals received and/or the RFP process.
11. Any irregularities or lack of clarity in the solicitation should be brought to the City's attention as soon as possible so that corrective addenda may be furnished to proposers if deemed necessary by the City.
12. Any final contract will include the City's standard insurance and indemnification requirements.
13. Proposals must include any exception to the City's standard insurance and/or indemnification requirements and shall include any and all of proposer's proposed terms and conditions, including the Proposer's standard contract language. The omission of these documents may render a proposal non-responsive (the Standard City Consultant Services Agreement is attached as an addendum).
14. Each proposer must include in its proposal a complete disclosure of any alleged significant prior or ongoing contract failures, suspensions, any civil or criminal litigation or investigation pending which involves the proposer or in which the proposer has been judged guilty or liable. Failure to comply with the terms of this provision will disqualify any proposal. The City reserves the right to reject any proposal based upon the proposer's prior history with the City or with any other party, which documents, without limitation, unsatisfactory performance, adversarial or contentious demeanor, significant failure(s) to meet contract milestones or other contractual failures.
15. Any contract resulting from this solicitation shall not be effective unless and until approved by the appropriate City officials.

16. Proposer understands and acknowledges that the representations above are material and important and will be relied on by the City in evaluation of the proposal.
17. By submitting a proposal, proposer represents and warrants that it has thoroughly examined and is familiar with work required under this RFP, that proposer has conducted such additional investigation as it deems necessary and convenient, that proposer is capable of providing the services requested by the City in a manner that meets the stated objectives and specifications as outlined in this RFP, and that proposer has reviewed and inspected all materials submitted in response to this RFP. Once the proposer has been selected, a failure to have read the conditions, instructions, and specifications herein shall not be cause to alter the contract or for selected proposer to request additional compensation.
18. By submitting a proposal, the proposer represents that it and its subsidiaries do not and will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment on the basis of race, religion, sex, color, national origin, sexual orientation, ancestry, marital status, physical condition, pregnancy or pregnancy- related conditions, political affiliations or opinion, age, or medical condition.

I. PROTEST PROCEDURE

Within five (5) business days of the City's final selection, any applicant that has submitted a responsive proposal and believes that the City has incorrectly selected another proposer for award may submit a written notice of protest. The notice of protest must be received by the City on or before 5:00 p.m. of the fifth business day after the City's issuance of the notice of intent to award.

Formal protests must be submitted via email to Human Resources Director Trish Raver at raver@walnut-creek.org and must include the words "In Protest of Request for Proposal" in the email subject line.

A protest must be in writing, including any documents or information it deems relevant, and must state all grounds upon which the protesting party asserts the Request for Proposal(s) or proposer selection process was improper.

The party filing the protest must concurrently transmit a copy of the protest and all supporting documents by fax or by e-mail to the bidder who is the subject of the protest.

Nothing in this section shall be construed as a waiver of the City's right to reject all bids/proposals. The City reserves the right to waive any bid irregularities not affecting the amount of the bid, except where such waiver would give the low bidder an advantage or benefit not allowed other bidders.

J. QUESTIONS

Please direct questions regarding this Request for Proposals to:

Kathryn M. Tunney
Human Resources Analyst
City of Walnut Creek
tunney@walnut-creek.org
(925) 943-5898 ext. 2413