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Request for Qualifications

PROJECT: Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan for the City of Gary, IN

The Project highlighted in this document is a result of a grant awarded to the City of Gary Redevelopment Department by the Indiana State Health Department (ISHD) Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity. This grant provides up to \$40,000 for professional services that will be awarded through this Request for Qualifications. This grant bridges two fiscal years, with each fiscal year ending on September 30th. A firm restriction that all respondents must be prepared to meet is that half of the funding (\$20,000) must be invoiced for project work conducted before October 1, 2020. We anticipate that the project will be completed with the approval and adoption of the resulting City of Gary's Bike and Pedestrian Master Bike Plan in the 1st quarter of 2021. Given the unique features and goals associated with Gary's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, as described in the attachments, we encourage cross firm teaming to bring the wide range of desired skills to the table.

Schedule of Selection*

- Request for Qualifications: June 26, 2020
- Submit Statement of Qualifications and proposal by July 17, 2020 at 4:00 pm CST (**electronic only submission preferred**)
- Review, Evaluate and Select Statement of Qualifications: July 18-31, 2020
- Issue Notice of Award/Sign Contracts: August 5, 2020

Requirements for Statement of Qualifications

- Name, address and brief description of firm.
- Resumes of key personnel to be assigned to this project, indicating % of time each will devote to this project.
- Concise narrative as to firm's or team's interest, particular abilities and qualifications related to this project.
- Describe other projects designed by this firm and key personnel pertinent to this project. Include reference contact information.
- Provide examples of knowledge, expertise and/or experience with other related work.

Evaluation Criteria

- Previous performance on contracts, including quality of work, timeliness, and cost control.
- Specialized experience and technical and policy expertise of the organization and its personnel in connection with the scope of services to be provided and the uniqueness and complexity of the project.
- **Approach to project, both in staff and/or team philosophy and innovative understanding of the project scope and unique challenges with implementation of the plan within the City of Gary.**
- Proximity to the City of Gary to ensure flexibility to participate in key project meetings and public outreach events in person.

Respectfully,

Aj Bytnar, executive director

* if there are any questions prior to submitting a response, please submit via email and all answers will be shared via a FAQ sheet on the Redevelopment department's webpage. Questions can be emailed to ajbytnar@gary.gov

Project Narrative / Overview of Scope:

The City of Gary differs from many communities across Indiana that have developed and implemented Bike and Pedestrian Master Plans. In other communities' access to bike and pedestrian infrastructure are primarily for recreational activities, however within the City of Gary they often are used as a primary transportation source. As a Legacy City, Gary faces many challenges, including a nearly 34% poverty rate, more than 6,500 abandoned properties, 1 in 5 homes are vacant, 2 in 5 homes are blighted, and until recently the City experienced very significant structural deficits that hindered progress. Collectively these factors create barriers to economic development and neighborhood level revitalization. As noted in the Transportation section of Gary's 2019 Comprehensive Plan (https://gary.gov/redevelopment/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2019/10/Gary-Comp-Plan_Final_Chapt-5.pdf pages 101-125), 19% of Gary's households do not own a car. This statistic is more than double the rate in Lake County and the State of Indiana. As a result, citizens are often observed biking or walking along US Route 12/20, a very busy thoroughfare. Many locations along US 12/20 are lacking sidewalks and have no shared or dedicated bike lanes. This creates dangerous situations for our citizens. Accordingly, mobility and access to a wider range of safe and connected transportation alternatives is a key issue for residents within the City and beyond.

Despite these challenges, the City of Gary is also blessed with an abundance of natural resources including Lake Michigan, the western portion of the Indiana Dunes National Park, the Gary Green Link, Marquette and Chanute trails, several extraordinary and unique nature preserves and many local parks. Gary's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan must simultaneously acknowledge both the opportunities associated with the richness of our natural resources and the significant physical, social, and economic challenges the City faces. The Master Plan must place a significant focus on robust public engagement and meeting the needs of every citizen. This will involve developing policies, programs, frameworks and infrastructure to address mobility challenges through the lens of social and environmental equity, safety, health and economic issues. This approach calls for a firm or team of firms that bridges technical and design expertise including universal design, adaptive reuse and complete streets experience as well as broad knowledge of innovative policy frameworks, ideas drawn from communities that have patterned Master Plans on successful international models (e.g., Amsterdam) and funding options to counter the City's challenges and produce a realistic actionable pathway forward.

The City of Gary views this Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan as an opportunity to think holistically about the Plan's role in providing recreation and active transportation improvements, connecting citizens to transit options, fostering healthy living and increasing quality of life as well as spurring investment that leads to economic development, neighborhood revitalization and increased social equity. The state of Indiana ranks high in obesity rates, designing of our bike and pedestrian infrastructure in ways that promote healthier lifestyles are paramount.

The City of Gary has a rich starting point for developing the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master plan. Robust data sources available include the Gary Counts database/mapping tool (<http://garycounts.org/map/>) and new Neighborhood Intel tools (Dynamo Metrics) that Gary will be bringing on in the coming months. Likewise, Gary's Comprehensive Plan Update (2019 Comp Plan - <https://gary.gov/planning/gary-2019-comprehensive-plan/>) provides a strong foundation for developing the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. The 2019 Comp Plan is a holistic blueprint for Gary's future that consolidates all existing (and adopted) plans into a single framework. Transportation and infrastructure assets and needs are a dominate theme within the 2019 Comp Plan. The plan also highlights the need to establish better connectivity to transit. In particular, addressing the first and last-mile challenge. The City of Gary is served by two key transit services: Gary's bus system operated by the Gary Public Transportation Corporation (GPTC) and the South Shore Line commuter rail that operates three stations in Gary (Clark Road, Metro Center in downtown and Lake St. in the Miller neighborhood). Improved access and mobility for bicycles and pedestrians is three-fold. First, these investments will improve overall non-motorized mobility as many of Gary's residents do not own their own vehicle. Such improvement will increase access to jobs, goods, services and education and training opportunities. Second, improved bicycle and pedestrian facilities will provide more opportunities for healthy activities and increased quality of life through recreation, fitness and connectivity to parks and natural areas within the City. Third, collectively these improvements will play a role in fostering economic development and revitalization at the neighborhood

level and beyond (see <http://indyculturaltrail.org.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/15-C02-CulturalTrail-Assessment.pdf> , Chicago’s 606 and New York City’s High Line, the Civic Commons approach, <https://civiccommons.us/>)

In addition, the 2019 Comp Plan embraces three planning and policy frameworks that are important to developing better connectivity, economic development and quality of life through improved bicycle and pedestrian planning: Transit Oriented Development (TOD), Complete Streets and Road Diets. These planning constructs help Gary utilize its robust, existing transportation network by repurposing local streets, better use of existing right-of-way and pavement and by connecting people and places by offering modal choice. The 2019 Comp Plan highlights the need to develop local and regional multiuse trails that connect residents within the City and externally to the greater Region. The City is also guided by the Gary Green Link Master Plan, Safe Routes to Schools Plan and NW Indiana Greenways and Blueways plan developed by the Northwest Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC), to name a few (see https://gary.gov/redevelopment/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2019/10/Gary-Comp-Plan_Final_Appendix-B_Plan-Summaries.pdf).

The City of Gary is currently working with partners and stakeholders on several bike and pedestrian trail initiatives including the Marquette Trail (e.g., the National Park Service, NIRPC, Save the Dunes, The National Park Trust) and proposed Gary Elevated project (NIRPC, GPTC, Health by Design, Purdue Extension and many other stakeholders). The Gary Elevated project is highlighted in the following attachment as an example of the holistic approach we envision in developing Gary’s Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. This year citizens and visitors alike look forward to the completion a cycle track and continuous sidewalks that will provide bike and pedestrian connections from the South Shore Commuter rail line to Lake Street. Beach in Gary’s Miller neighborhood. These initiatives and many others incorporated into our 2019 Comp Plan provide a strong foundation for development of Gary’s Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

With the understanding of Gary’s challenges, holistic vision and the scope of work embedded in the narrative above, the City of Gary looks forward to collaborating with a professional services firm or team of firms to develop a Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan unique to Gary’s circumstances and opportunities. This Plan is intended to be a significant part of lifting up and moving our City forward.

Overarching Goals and Key Deliverables:

- **Understand** the true prevalence of walking and bicycling currently in the community and **increase** the number of bicyclists and walkers in the community.
- **Increase** the amount of people walking and bicycling for **everyday transportation purposes** such as commuting to work, walking or bicycling to school and running errands.
- **Provide** guidance and priorities for implementing **programs, policies and infrastructure** to support walking and bicycling with a broad range of funding and support.

Key Deliverables of the plans will be:

- A formal evaluation of the existing pedestrian and bicycle network, policies, and programs
- Policy and programming recommendations
- Prioritized route, facility type and maintenance recommendations, with cost analysis
- Technical, policy and programming Action plan recommendations for implementation of the plan for the next five years
- Substantial community-focused public input is required as part of the planning process
- Formal adoption of Gary’s Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan

Please submit response to Aj Bytnar, executive director: ajbytnar@gary.gov