

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS



May 7, 2021

City of Merced Housing Division Projects

The City of Merced Housing Division is seeking qualified applicants to be placed on a master list of prequalified non-profit housing developers that may cooperate with the Housing Division and the City of Merced on future projects. Final contracts will still need to be approved by the City Council. Applications accepted on a continuous basis.



ABOUT THE CITY OF MERCED

Merced is a dynamic community of over 88,000 people, with friendly small town living in a mid-size city. Opened in 2005, the University of California Merced provides new educational and economic opportunity, adding to the already-established growth of the region. Merced's population is youthful and diverse.

Located in the heart of California's agricultural Central Valley, Merced is the region's hub for education, culture, and business. The community offers abundant shopping, pleasant neighborhoods and tree-lined streets. Bicycle paths along creeks link major City parks. Even with recent increases in prices, Merced's housing remains affordable compared to many other California locations. Merced's revitalized downtown is emerging as the entertainment center of the area. Annual events and festivals bring regional and even national recognition.

The City's many amenities include: the Applegate Zoo, Art Kamangar Center at the Merced Theatre, the Mainzer Theatre and Restaurant, the Merced Multicultural Arts Center, Playhouse Merced, the Merced Mall, the Senior Community Center, the Historic Tioga Apartments, Merced College, University of California, Merced, a wide array of restaurants, various sports facilities, Lake Yosemite, plentiful public transportations, and more.

ABOUT THE CITY OF MERCED HOUSING DIVISION

The City of Merced Housing Division oversees several grants and programs to help improve the housing quality within the City of Merced. In addition, mini-grants are provided annually to those non-profit organizations that provide programs pertaining to the Housing Division's Annual Report Goals.

The primary sources of funding are Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME) funds issued and administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

The primary use of CDBG funds is to give maximum feasible priority to activities which will carry out one of the national objectives of benefit to low- and moderate-income families or aid in the prevention or elimination of slums or blight. The intent of the HOME program is to provide and increase the supply of decent, affordable housing to lower-income households and work with non-profit housing providers, the State, and private-sector participation to accomplish that goal.

The Housing Division is also involved in community development and neighborhood revitalization. HOME funds can only be used for housing activities, while CDBG can be used for broader community development purposes within established guidelines. Community Activities selected are designed to reflect Annual Plan Goals and may include public services, neighborhood restoration, and renovation.

Public Services are programs and services provided by local non-profit community organizations that improve quality of life for the citizens of Merced.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The City of Merced Housing Division invites professional and experienced applicants to apply to be placed on a master list of prequalified affordable housing development partners and parties eligible to work on federally-funded projects with the City within the boundaries of the City of Merced.

Parties who have experience in CDBG and HOME funded projects, assisting people facing the challenges of being without housing, leveraging additional revenue sources, working with private and public agencies, and dealing with underserved populations are encouraged to apply. As projects become available, the most suitable party on the master list will be selected, contacted, and if still available and willing, put under contract. Being selected and placed on the prequalified list is not a pledge of project approval, funding commitment, or project entitlements.

The master list of prequalified parties can also be used to determine interest in other funding opportunities which may require “over the counter” or competitive opportunities in support of affordable housing. Those may include tax credits, bonds, Affordable Housing Sustainable Communities (AHSC) and others.

The applications are accepted on a continuous basis.

SELECTION PROCESS

- ▶ The City of Merced Housing Division is looking for partners in future projects that will be funded by the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and potentially other sources. Because there is often a short turn-around time on projects, and because there may be several projects that become available at once, it may be necessary for the Housing Division to contract these projects quickly. Having a master list of pre-qualified partners will make it possible to meet the deadlines, and quickly accommodate the needs of the public being served.
- ▶ A Selection Panel may establish a qualified list based on their qualifications alone to submit a proposal, or based on a subsequent interview. The Selection Panel may recommend selecting the finalists based on their qualifications and/or interviews, or not selecting any of the parties.

Once a project is selected as part of the City Council's Priorities and is funded as part of the 5 Year Consolidated Action Plan, the Community Action Plan or a process approved by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development or the Merced City Council, a Selection Panel may be assembled to determine the best party for the project. The Housing Division staff may serve as the Selection Panel, or opt to form a separate Selection Panel, taking into account recommendations from internal and external stakeholders. The Selection Panel shall advise the Housing Division on the selection of applicants and approval of plans, projects and/or program designs. The Selection Panel is responsible for selecting one or more applicants, depending on the number, or size, of projects or funding, available. The Housing Division shall make a recommendation to the City Council. The City Council will have final approval authority of which applicant will be placed under contract.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

The following criteria shall be used by the Selection Panel to evaluate applicants for the master list:

- ▶ Demonstrates ability to accomplish goals of project as represented in past work and supporting materials;
- ▶ Demonstrates capacity for working with federally-funded projects and complying with local, state and federal guidelines that are appropriate to the project goals and possible site, if applicable;
- ▶ Demonstrates interest and capability in engaging community representatives in a project;
- ▶ Demonstrates experience in successfully completing works of similar scope, scale, budget and complexity, or articulates how s/he will bring the necessary technical skills to the project;
- ▶ Demonstrates interest in and understanding of HUD and federal projects;
- ▶ Demonstrates an understanding of federal funding, and the ability to leverage other partners, both government and private, to expand financial opportunities.
- ▶ Demonstrate the ability to work with programs that are new to the City of Merced, such as Farm Worker Housing, to expand opportunities for residents;
- ▶ Is available to perform the scope of work in a timely and professional manner;
- ▶ Demonstrates excellence in aesthetic quality, workmanship, innovation and creativity, as needed to accomplish the goals of potential projects;
- ▶ Ability to reduce cost through economies of scale, where appropriate;
- ▶ Demonstrates feasibility of construction and installation, where appropriate;
- ▶ Demonstrates feasibility in terms of budget, timeline, safety, security, durability, operation, maintenance, conservation, legal and ethical issues;
- ▶ Has the ability to work with diverse communities, in a variety of languages, providing materials that are best suited to the target audiences;
- ▶ Be able to conduct outreach in a wide variety of ways, from traditional face-to-face meetings to utilizing social media and other means.
- ▶ Demonstrate the ability to complete project entitlements, experience with the California Environmental Quality Control Act (CEQA), and National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA).

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

This is an open process. The RFQ outlines the step-by-step process and conditions that apply.

To submit your credentials for consideration, please include the following materials:

- 1) Cover sheet with name, phone number, email address, and website (if applicable)
- 2) A statement of interest, with a summary of affordable housing areas of concentration or specialty, potential funding sources being sought, or other ways to demonstrate project preferences and options.
- 3) Statement listing project leads that includes your history, education, past projects, and/or experience, along with that of any other principals involved in the project
- 4) Up to three samples of previous projects with brief descriptions (photo printouts or flash drive containing samples can be submitted)
- 5) Three (3) references the panel may contact for previous experience.
- 6) The form of organization, non-profit, government agency, etc.
- 7) Is the organization determined to be a Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO) by HUD, or is there an interest to gain this designation?

SUBMITTING QUALIFICATIONS & INQUIRY CONTACT

Email submittals:

Housing Program Supervisor
Kim Nutt
nuttk@cityofmerced.org

Submittals by mail are accepted on a continuous basis. Mail to:

Attn: Kim Nutt
City of Merced
Housing Division
678 W. 18th Street
Merced, CA 95340

All inquiries must be directed to our point of contact by email, nuttk@cityofmerced.org.

APPLICATIONS ACCEPTED ON A CONTINUOUS BASIS.

CONTRACTOR AGREEMENT

Once a qualified partner and a potential project has been identified, upon recommendation of the Housing Division, the City Manager or designee shall coordinate agreements with selected contractors, individuals, and/or organizations. The agreement may include the scope of work, schedule and relevant terms and conditions. The scope of work will generally include final design, engineering, fabrication and installation, if necessary for the project, details of the project, the target audience and the desired outcome. All such agreements will be presented to the City Council to allow for the approval of the contract following the City's current Award Authority for Contracts.

