Request for Proposals
City of Albany Operational and Organizational Assessment for the City's Finance Department

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City of Albany Operational and Organizational Assessment for the City's Finance Department

The City of Albany is requesting proposals from qualified firms or individuals interested in conducting an Operational and Organizational Assessment of the City's Finance Department, recommending operational efficiencies, organizational structures, and performance measures to ensure the Department functions at a high level of efficiency and effectiveness. This document outlines the scope of work for consulting services. Three copies of the proposal shall be submitted in writing by to:

Nicole Almaguer, Assistant City Manager/City Clerk
City of Albany
1000 San Pablo Avenue, Albany CA 94706
Attn: RFP Finance Department Organizational Assessment

I. INTRODUCTION

The City of Albany lies on the northwestern corner of Alameda County, California, bordered by the cities of El Cerrito and Richmond on the north, the City of Berkeley on the east and south side, and by unincorporated Kensington in Contra Costa County on the north and east. The City of Albany was incorporated in 1908, and at the time of the 2010 census had a population of 18,500 residents. Albany is known for the excellent quality of its K-12 school district, and small town ambiance in an urban setting.

The City Council consists of five members elected at-large to four year terms. Annually the City Council selects one of its members to serve as Mayor and another as Vice Mayor. Council Members may not serve more than two consecutive terms without a break in service of at least two years. The Office of the City Treasurer is also an elected official that serves a four year term without term limits.

The City is comprised of the following departments: Fire, Police, Finance, Public Works, Community Development, Recreation & Community Services, and the Administration Department including Information Technology, City Clerk, Community Media, City Attorney, and City Manager.
The Finance Department currently consists of a Finance Director, Senior Accountant, Financial Analyst, Payroll Technician, Accounts Payable Technician, an Accounts Receivable Technician, and a part-time finance assistant. The Department is also supported on as needed basis by consultants and interns.

The City Treasurer is an elected position that is defined in the City’s Charter, and further referenced in the City’s Municipal Code. The City Treasurer serves a term of four years, and there is no limit on the number of terms that can be served.

Historically, the Finance Department has been referred to as the Finance & Administrative Services Department, and the current focus of the Department is City Finance. The Finance Department is responsible for monitoring the fiscal operations of the City with executive oversight by the City Manager and the City Council. The primary functions and duties of the department include:

Accounts Payable/Receivable, Payroll, Business Licenses, Budgeting, Financial Reporting and Accounting. In addition, the Finance Director also serves as the lead staff member to the Bay Cities Joint Powers Insurance Authority (BCJPIA). This seventeen-member entity provides general liability insurance, property insurance, earthquake and automobile insurance and legal assistance.

The department also addresses the long-term financial operations of the City by developing the five-year revenue and expenditure forecasts, midyear budget review and revisions, cost analysis of labor contracts, general budgetary oversight and control, grant funding, debt issuance, and fiscal administration of the City's capital improvement projects.

The department also compiles financial reports - income statements, balance sheets, trial balances and other general ledger functions, and compiles and reconciles general fixed assets. The department has recently transitioned to a new financial management program "Munis", which is intended to help further enhance financial accounting throughout City operations.

II. PURPOSE OF THE REQUEST

The City's Finance Department has experienced a significant transition with the recent financial management program. As part of the transition, there is now an increased role of administration occurring in each City department including entering purchase orders, invoices, and assistance in financial budgeting and monitoring. Also in the recent past, the Finance Department staff levels have increased beyond the historical allocation from five (5) full time positions to six (6), and one part-time position. The City Treasurer is an elected official that works on a part-time basis.
The Albany City Council 2017 Strategic Plan was adopted by the Council in February 2017, and is intended to identify strategic issues, and develop new strategic direction, goals and objectives for the City. The City Council Strategic Plan includes the goal to “Facilitate Government Accountability”, with the objective to explore alternatives to the current City Treasurer structure and conduct analysis to determine best practices.

In addition, the Albany City Council adopted an Economic Development Plan in September 2017 to further promote economic vitality within the City. The plan discusses the current business license program and suggests review of the program and fee structure to reconsider the current employee-based fee schedule, improve quality of data and move towards online submittals.

The City is now seeking an independent consultant to review and assess the organizational structure of the Finance Department and explore alternatives to the current City Treasurer structure, review and assess operational functions, staffing levels, and make recommendations that will enhance the organizational operations for current and future needs.

III. SCOPE OF SERVICES

The information being sought by the City will require the accomplishment of the following tasks:
(In responding, please identify the order for completing these tasks and any other tasks that may be necessary to complete the scope of work.)

Organizational Review

- Conduct an examination of the Finance Department’s organizational structure
- Explore alternatives to the current City Treasurer structure and conduct analysis to determine best practices
- Assess the functional assignments and human resources required to adequately perform duties.
- Evaluate supervisory roles and needs within the Department
- Assess administrative strengths and areas in need of improvement

Operational Review

- Review Department operational functions and workflow process for each area
- Evaluate current Business License process and identify the potential for on-line systems.
- Assess Department interactions and overlap with other City Departments

Recommendations

- Identify best practices and performance measures for the Department including timely financial reporting
• Recommend an optimal organizational model based on available budget and staffing
• Recommend an optimal model for the duties of City Treasurer, explore alternatives to the current City Treasurer structure
• Provide recommendations for streamlining procedures and processes
• Identify opportunities to make business license program more efficient and user-friendly for businesses and staff
• Provide training recommendations to improve operations and support succession planning, and suggestions regarding the use of cross training
• Identify staffing and supervisory requirements, both current and future

IV. DELIVERABLES

At the conclusion of the operational and organizational reviews, the consultant shall, as described in the Scope of Work:

1. Provide a summary of findings that effectively communicates the information reviewed
2. Identify key issues and opportunities, and
3. Formulate recommendations.

A Draft Report with an Executive Summary shall be issued to City staff. The document shall include the summary of findings and recommendations as identified in the Scope of Work. Any documentation prepared by the Consultant shall be provided to the City in both hard copies and electronic format. A Final Report shall be issued following staff comments on the draft. In addition, City staff may require the Consultant to conduct a PowerPoint presentation to City officials. The report should provide sufficient information for policy decisions regarding operational and service options. Ten (10) copies of the Final Report will be required along with an electronic copy.

V. TIMELINE

This project should be completed within 60 days of contract award.

VI. SUBMISSIONS

Please submit qualifications, identify key staff to be assigned to this project, provide resumes for each key staff member; provide at least three (3) professional references for work that was performed similar to that requested in this RFP, and provided a detailed description of your approach to the project, time schedule, and not to exceed total fee amount.
VII. SELECTION CRITERIA

The successful applicant must have operational and organizational assessment experience. The successful firm will have demonstrated their ability to meet these requirements.

Other criteria include:

- Completeness of response to the RFP
- Experience with similar projects and reference feedback
- Creativity
- Cost
- Oral communication skills
- Writing and formatting skills

VIII. REQUIREMENTS OF PROPOSAL

The following materials should be submitted with the proposal.

- **Cover Letter**
  
  The cover letter should briefly state the consultant’s understanding of the work to be performed, the commitment to perform the work in the required timelines, and why the consultant believes it is best qualified to perform the duties and tasks outlined and described in scope of work contained in this request. It should be signed by an official with the legal authority to commit the resources of the firm.

- **Qualifications**
  
  - The proposal should include the following information and materials:
    
    - Qualifications and Related Experience of Personnel Who Will Perform Work. Résumés of all personnel who are proposed to provide professional services to the City of Albany within the Scope of Work outlined and described in this request should be included. Résumés should include all relevant experience, education, and other qualifications over the past 3 years.
    
    - Prior Relevant Experience. A description of prior work experience and projects relevant to the Scope of Work outlined and described in this request should be included.
    
    - References of Local Government Clients. Please include a list of at least three (3) current and/or previous local government clients located in California for which a consultant assigned to the project has rendered
professional services similar to the scope of work outlined and described in this request

- **Approach, Scope, and Timelines**
  Provide a proposed approach and projected timeline to conduct and complete each step in the Scope of Work

- **Cost**
  - Cost Estimate with justification
  - Justification of hours and costs may be required prior to final selection, and will be required prior to execution of a contract.
  - Proposal shall include hourly rates for all personnel on the project.
  - Proposal should include options for reducing or adding services

**IX. General Information**

1. The City of Albany reserves the exclusive right on its selection of a consultant.

2. All proposals submitted will be subject to public records laws.

3. The City reserves the right to cancel or reissue the RFP or revise the timeline at any time.

4. The City reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to waive minor irregularities in the proposal process. The City may accept any proposal if such action is believed to be in the best interest of the City.

5. The City is not liable for any cost incurred by the proposer prior to execution of a contract.

6. The City reserves the right to negotiate scope and cost with the consultant.

7. The project team shall be approved by the City of Albany. The City must approve any changes in the project team.

**X. Questions During Proposal Period**

- All questions should be directed to Nicole Almaguer, Assistant City Manager/City Clerk. Do not contact any other staff members or elected officials of the City of Albany.

**XI. PROPOSAL TIME LINE**

Deadline for proposals is 4:00PM, Thursday, November 2, 2017.
Deliver four printed copies proposals to:
**Nicole Almaguer, Assistant City Manager/City Clerk**
**City of Albany, 1000 San Pablo Avenue, Albany, CA 94706**
Attention: Finance Department Organizational Assessment
nalmaguer@albanyca.org