

West LA Master Plan Implementation Questions & Answers

May 31, 2016

1. Does the Department of Veterans Affairs envision that this solicitation for the finalization and implementation of the Department's framework Draft Master Plan would be fully separate from the process of awarding and issuing of Enhanced Used Leases? Or would the awarding of EUL's be part of this solicitation? Or would the specific responses to this solicitation be a factor in determining which direction the VA chooses to take?

Answer: The requirements under this solicitation are separate and distinct from any Enhanced Used Leases.

2. What future Enhanced-Use Lease or other leasing opportunities at the Campus might be included within this competitive bidding process, and as part of the five-year implementation of this Scope of Work?

Answer: None. There will be no additional Enhanced-Use Leasing or lease opportunities within this contract.

3. The Scope of Work in terms of master planning, mapping of backbone infrastructure attracts a much different response and is an entirely different organizational skill set than building, owning, operating, serving supportive housing for veterans. Does the Department of Veterans Affairs envision that the contractor team awarded this solicitation under the Scope of Work would include qualified affordable housing developers, who would then be awarded future EUL's and then during the five-year scope of work begin implementation of predevelopment activities under the Scope of Work concurrent with the completion of the community outreach process and finalization and implementation of the Department's framework Draft Master Plan finalization and subsequently enter into Enhanced Used Leases?

Answer: No

4. One or more affordable housing development and/or veterans services agencies (with significant, practical and immediately relevant expertise as pertains to Key Programs, Authorities and Concepts) might seek to participate in this solicitation. However, these same housing development or services agencies would likely be more interested in competing in any future Enhanced-Use Lease opportunities for permanent supportive housing, short-term bridge housing, or other specialized uses for which these same agencies are highly qualified. Does the Department of Veterans Affairs envision that the participation in an awarded contract under this solicitation of any non-profit housing development or services agencies with significant, practical expertise as pertains to Key Programs, Authorities and Concepts, would in turn be precluded from

competing in any future Enhanced-Use Lease or other leasing opportunities at the Campus?

Answer: Offerors should note that for all procurements that VA issues in its ongoing effort to revitalize and implement a master plan for the Greater Los Angeles campus -- VA plans to carefully examine the offers received in accordance with applicable laws and regulations (including the Federal Acquisition Regulation (48 C.F.R. Chapter 1) and the VA Acquisition Regulation (48 C.F.R. Chapter 8)) – to avoid any existence of actual or apparent conflicts of interests and to prevent unfair competitive advantage.

5. Is it VA's intention for this solicitation to be set aside for a service-disabled veteran-owned or veteran-owned small business?

Answer: The VA recognizes and encourages SDVOSB/VOSB participation on this requirement. There may be consideration provided to SDVOSB/VOSBs.

6. The section entitled "REQUIRED EXPERIENCE (ENVIRONMENTAL & HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMPONENT)" in the draft Scope of Work (page 8 and 9) mentions:

"The contractor shall identify at least three (3) high-profile Federal Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) projects it has completed. The contractor may also highlight if those projects were legally challenged under the NEPA and the outcome of litigation if the contractor has knowledge of such."

The same section goes on to mention:

"If a contractor proposes collaborating with another firm to perform one of the tasks described in this Scope of Work, they need to show they have had prior professional relationships with that firm. A minimum of three (3) such collaborative efforts should be identified."

Can you clarify if the prior working relationship component for three relevant projects is specific only to the environmental & historic preservation component, or if it applies to each task identified in the Scope of Work?

Answer: The VA is looking for consistency for the entire project not solely specific to NEPA. The VA is looking for contractors to provide evidence of a successful project and have demonstrated experience working together. The language pertaining to the minimum requirement of "at least three (3)" and "a minimum of three (3)" have been removed.

7. Will there be a Conflict Of Interest (COI) of a firm working on this masterplan and subsequent phases of the project?

Answer: Please refer to the answer on Question #4; this question has already been addressed.

8. Is there a Conflict Of Interest (COI) for this Masterplan Phase assignment if a firm worked on the current preliminary master plan?

Answer: Please refer to the answer on Question #4; this question has already been addressed.

Under the Veterans First Contracting Program, acquisitions must be set aside for SDVOSB concerns if the VA determines that there is a reasonable expectation that offers will be received by at least two SDVOSB concerns and that award can be made at a fair and reasonable price. 38 U.S.C. § 8127(d) (the VA Act's "Rule of Two").

9. In response to the April 2016 Sources Sought Notice did the government receive less than two expressions of interest from SDVOSB concerns concerning VA262-16-N-0693?

Answer: The government received at least two expressions of interest from SDVOSB/VOSB firms from the Sources Sought notice. The government is currently evaluating the use of a SDVOSB/VOSB set-aside.

10. What was the basis for the VA's determination that it could not make award to an SDVOSB at a fair and reasonable price?

Answer: The VA is still determining whether a set-aside will be utilized for this requirement.

11. Why did the government decide not to set-aside VA262-16-N-0693 for SDVOSB concerns under the Rule of Two?

Answer: VA262-16-N-0693 is being utilized to gather information and survey the market with a Request for Information (RFI) via a Sources Sought notice. The government will determine whether to set aside this requirement based on its market research and the results of the Sources Sought notice.

12. Your sample pricing sheet indicate positions for junior and senior program managers and project managers, but I did not see any desired qualifications for these positions. Will these be included in the final document?

Answer: A senior position is equivalent to a partner in a firm while a junior position is equivalent to a journeyman level.

13. The solicitation mentions scheduling and estimating deliverables. Are there desired qualifications for these positions?

Answer: The VA will need further clarification for this question in order to provide a response.

- 14.** Section O of the solicitation discusses the deliverables for the proposal but does not mention the format of the proposal desired. Is there a preferred proposal format?

Answer: The use of a specific software and format will be outlined in the final solicitation.

- 15.** There is no mention of scoring criteria for the proposals. Will this be provided?

Answer: The government is still evaluating the evaluation criteria that will be utilized for this requirement. Evaluation factors will be outlined and described in the final solicitation.

- 16.** Who will be evaluating the proposals?

Answer: A panel comprised of VA personnel only will be evaluating the proposals. That process represents an inherently governmental function, as it is so intimately related to the public interest that it mandates performance by Federal employees. VA therefore plans to conduct the evaluations in a manner that comports with applicable law and regulation, and avoids the existence of any actual or apparent conflicts of interests or unfair competitive advantage.

- 17.** The documented prior relationship between firms for subcontracting seems burdensome. Can this be reduced or eliminated as the best team for the project may come from members with less working history?

Answer: The VA is looking for contractors to provide evidence of a successful project and have demonstrated experience working together. The language pertaining to the minimum requirement of “at least three (3)” and “a minimum of three (3)” have been removed.

- 18.** Will selection for this work preclude you from participating in future VA or Army Corps of Engineers solicitations for Project Management/Construction Management work on the campus?

Answer: Please see answer to Question #4; this question has already been addressed.

- 19.** As you know, under the Veterans First Contracting Program, acquisitions must be set aside for SDVOSB concerns if the VA determines that there is a reasonable expectation that offers will be received by at least two SDVOSB concerns and that award can be made at a fair and reasonable price. 38 U.S.C. § 8127(d). (the VA Act’s “Rule of Two”). In response to its April 2016 Sources Sought Notice, or any other

outreach effort, did the government receive less than two expressions of interest from SDVOSB concerns concerning VA262-16-N-0693?

Answer: This has been addressed in the answer for Question #9.

20. If the government received at least two expressions of interest, what was the basis for the government's determination that it could not make award to an SDVOSB concern of a contract under VA262-16-N-0693 at a fair and reasonable price?

Answer: This has been addressed in the answer for Question #10.

21. Finally, why did the government fail to set-aside VA262-16-N-0693 for SDVOSB concerns under the Rule of Two?

Answer: This has been addressed in the answer for Question #11.

22. Page 9: If a contractor proposes collaborating with another firm to perform one of the tasks described in this Scope of Work, they need to show they have had prior professional relationships with that firm. A minimum of three (3) such collaborative efforts should be identified.

Answer: Please see answer to Question #17 this has previously been addressed.

23. The requirement for having three collaborative efforts on any task in the Scope of Work seems very restrictive. We would like to see this removed.

Answer: Please see answer to Question #17 this has previously been addressed.

24. Item: Section J. The contractor shall indicate the amount of time each of these key persons will be assigned to this project. Without knowing the actual scope of work, this may not be possible at the proposal stage.

Answer: The scope of work will be issued at the task order level.

25. Item: L.2 Contractor Personnel. The contractor shall not change personnel during the performance of the contract without at least ten (10) days prior written notification and an in person discussion between the contractor and the COR, VA's VISN 22 Director, the WLA Medical Center Director, VA's OGC Appointees, VA Contracting Officer, and final written approval from VA's Contracting Officer.

Question: In the case of an emergency situation such as an accident or death, this requirement would not be possible to meet. Recommend changing it to eliminate the 10-day requirement.

Answer: The government can make exceptions for emergencies. The contractor will be required to submit any changes to key personnel in writing to the VA contracting officer.

- 26. Item: O.2 Proposal Submission Requirements.** Proposals shall not exceed fifty (50) pages in length in Arial 12 point font, exclusive of the resumes of the members comprising the contractor team which can be included as an attachment to the proposal. In that regard, contractors should provide VA with ten (10) copies of the proposal, in both CD format and in one (1) or more three (3)-ring binders.

Question: Page restriction to 50 pages at 12 point font means the large font takes up a lot of room. Would the VA consider extending the page limit to 75 pages and 10 point font?

Answer: Please see answer to Question #14. This question has already been addressed in Question #14.

- 27. Should be set aside for SDVOSBs.**

Answer: This is not a question, but this topic already been addressed multiple times above.

- 28. SOW Section A: The Master Plan centers around homeless and housing. To what extent does this contract involve planning of the main medical buildings and operations on the campus?**

Answer: Part of the contractor's assistance to the VA under this contract will include due diligence in the areas of planning and sequencing throughout areas of the campus, as doing so will be key to VA's overall objective to revitalize the campus into a safe, welcoming community for Veterans and their families.

- 29. SOW Sections D&E: Assume "principals" with applicable experience extends to the subs a contractor would team with?**

Answer: The prime contractor must have the minimum of 10-years of experience; the subcontractor cannot make up for the required experience.

- 30. SOW Section O: Indicates each contractor will have to present their proposals at a face to face presentation to the selection board. Is this prior to any down select?**

Answer: Only vendors in the competitive range will be asked to provide an oral presentation to the government.

- 31.** Given the broad scope of professional services VA is requiring, would the Department consider releasing the RFP via the GSA MOBIS Schedule, SINs 874-1, 874-2, 874-6 and 874-7 and/or via the GSA Environmental Services Schedule, SINs 899-1 or 899-2?

Answer: The government is considering competing this requirement amongst GSA schedule holders under the GSA PSS. The government is still conducting research on set-asides as well as GSA, open market, etc.

- 32.** Will any VA contractor (and its subcontractors) that supported VA with the West Los Angeles (WLA) Draft Master Plan (DMP) issued by the Secretary on January 28, 2016, be ineligible to be an offeror, or a team member of a potential offeror for this contemplated contract?

Answer: Offerors should note that for all procurements that VA issues in its ongoing effort to revitalize and implement a master plan for the Greater Los Angeles campus -- VA plans to carefully examine the solicitations received in accordance with applicable laws and regulations (including the Federal Acquisition Regulation (48 C.F.R. Chapter 1) and the VA Acquisition Regulation (48 C.F.R. Chapter 8)) – to avoid any existence of actual or apparent conflicts of interests and to prevent unfair competitive advantage.

- 33.** Will VA require the awardee to assist VA in managing or overseeing activities of other VA contractors including planning firms, architecture/engineering design firms, construction contractors, or construction management contractors?

Answer: No

- 34.** Can VA please detail the exact type of new or supplemental master planning services and activities required by VA to finalize and adopt the WLA Master Plan compared to any master planning services or activities already provided VA by the WLA DMP contractor(s)?

Answer: No. Please refer to the solicitation and RFQ.

- 35.** Does the “minimum 3 collaborations” found in the last paragraph of Section E, on page 9 of the draft Statement of Work dated April 27, 2016, apply to all members of the proposed team?

Answer: Please see refer to the answer for Question #17. This question has already been addressed.

- 36.** Will VA require the awardee to provide environmental planning or compliance services for any future federal real estate transaction (e.g., Enhance-Use Lease) or other agreements required to implement the Final WLA Master Plan?

Answer: Please refer to the solicitation.

37. Will VA require the awardee to track, monitor, and implement the tasks and deliverables or provide environmental planning/compliance support for any future VA-funded construction projects in some, or all, 5 “land use” Zones identified in the WLA DMP?

Answer: This is addressed in the solicitation.

38. Has VA determined under the National Environmental Policy Act that finalization and/or implementation of the WLA Master Plan requires VA to publish, at a minimum, an Environmental Impact Statement?

Answer: VA anticipates completing a programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for the draft master plan with subsequent tiered project-level NEPA analysis and other due diligence activities as needed to comply with NEPA and other environmental and historic preservation requirements.

39. Has VA determined that finalization and/or implementation of the WLA Master Plan, including redevelopment of federal property through Enhanced-Use Leases or other forms of public-private partnerships, is subject to State of California (or local) environmental planning laws or regulations, including the California Environmental Quality Act?

Answer: As a Federal agency, VA is not required to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). VA anticipates that private entities involved in the redevelopment effort through leases on the campus (subject to enactment of S. 2013 and HR 3484) will be subject to CEQA. VA will cooperate with any CEQA compliance efforts.

40. Will VA consider adding new labor categories to the draft pricing template to more accurately reflect the amount and types of required professional expertise and support services outlined in the draft SOW? For example, the draft pricing template does not include categories or subcategories for environmental planner, historic preservation planner, or strategic communication specialist (critical areas of expertise VA officials emphasized during the Industry Day). We believe these and other specialized LCATs (or other Contractor-defined LCATs) should be added to the pricing template.

Answer: Additional labor categories will be added based upon the VA and needs of the contract. The labor categories that were presented in the slideshow presentation for industry day were samples.

41. If a prospective offeror’s team includes a law firm, will it be precluded from providing a client, other than VA, with legal services related to a future real estate development or financing transaction needed to implement the WLA Final Master Plan?

Answer: Please refer back to Question #4

42. If a prospective offeror's team includes a for-profit or non-for-profit housing developer, or any other type of real estate developer, will that team member be precluded from pursuing future real estate development opportunities (e.g., Enhanced-Use Leases) identified in the WLA Final Master Plan?

Answer: Please refer back to Question #4

43. Will VA require prospective offeror's program or project management staff to be certified by the Project Management Institute as Project Management Professionals?

Answer: No, this is not a requirement.

44. Will VA require the awardee to perform detailed facility condition assessments, engineering studies, utility assessments, architectural or space planning studies, or detailed real estate market and feasibility studies? If not, does VA plan to provide engineering and asset management information to the awardee?

Answer: These tasks are related to master planning. The VA will provide the information it has. However, if requested, the contractor will need to provide the requested services/studies.

45. Will VA require the awardee to create detailed transportation or parking models or create trip generation or parking demand studies? If not, does VA plan to provide traffic and parking information to the awardee?

Answer: Please see answer to Question #44.

46. Can VA provide an estimated level of effort (e.g., number of labor hours) for each of the labor categories included in the pricing template?

Answer: The number of labor categories will be provided on the task order level.

47. Will VA require the awardee to analyze and assist VA in re-negotiating all or some of the existing real estate or land use agreements with non-federal entities (e.g., University of California, Los Angeles) currently occupying the WLA campus?

Answer: No, the contractor will not have to analyze and assist the VA in re-negotiating all or some of the existing real estate or land use agreements with non-federal entities occupying the WLA campus.

48. Does VA plan to issue one or more task orders simultaneously with contract award? If so, can VA identify the types of services it expects to request at contract award?

Answer: This will be based on the VA's needs at the time of contract award.

49. Is VA's preliminary procurement schedule dependent on legal changes to Title 38 of United States Code or enactment of any federal laws?

Answer: No, it is not dependent. The preliminary procurement schedule is not dependent on the legal changes. The VA will be moving forward with planning regardless of the situation.