

The CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION of the CITY OF NEWTON
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RESEARCH AND SUPPORT RFP
Due Date: _____, 2016, 5 p.m. EST

INTRODUCTION:

The Newton Charter Review Commission (“The Commission”) is seeking proposals from a qualified firm to assist in reviewing and modifying the City’s Charter. Such assistance will be limited to research and facilitation services.

BACKGROUND:

The Newton Charter Review Commission has been tasked with the responsibility to reviewing the City’s of Newton’s present charter (last updated in 1971). The Commission has until May of 2017 to make suggestions for alteration, amendment, or replacement of the Charter, either in whole or in part.

The Commission needs assistance in:

- Collecting research on appropriate government benchmarks, sample charter provisions, and best practices either considered or put in place in other municipalities in Massachusetts and elsewhere, and
- Occasional assistance in facilitating debate within the Commission in order to structure discussion to arrive at consensus.

TIMELINE:

This schedule of events represents the Commission’s best estimate of the schedule that will be followed for this RFP. If a component of this schedule, such as the deadline for receipt of proposals, is delayed, the rest of the schedule will be shifted by the same number of days.

The approximate RFP schedule is as follows:

- RFP Issued: _____
- Deadline for receipt of questions and objections related to the RFP: _____
- Deadline for answers or amendments related to the RFP: _____
- **Proposals due (electronically):** _____
- Proposal Evaluation Committee evaluation completed by approximately: _____
- Commission issues Notice of Intent to Award a Contract approximately: _____
- Commission issues contract approximately: _____
- Contract start: No later than XX days from issue of contract

SCOPE OF THE PROJECT:

The firm chosen to conduct this work will be required to develop a project timeline with Commission leadership, to include regular reports of progress/deliverables/benchmarks at agreed upon intervals beginning with 30 days, 60 days, 90--days, etc.

The following scope is a suggested framework. While embracing the themes in the scope below, the proposing firm should feel free to suggest in their proposal optional services based on experience and capabilities.

0. Communications

No planning can be effectively undertaken without “the goal in mind”, and clearly stated goals are the necessary foundation of a successful planning effort. A sound communications plan will ensure clarity of purpose and objectives throughout the effort.

Project Launch and Objective Setting

- The consultant will work with the Commission to coordinate, plan and schedule both a kickoff meeting and a set of objectives for the consultant’s engagement. The project kickoff meeting will include a clarification and confirmation of the workplan, timeline and deliverables to ensure that all parties are operating under the same understanding.
- Provide consultant team with existing studies, plans and other relevant studies identified during the working session.
- Draft a set of objectives for Commission review.

Communications Plan

- Establish a plan of regular communications including but not limited to regular Commission meetings.
- Schedule key milestone meetings to discuss both findings and the implications of those findings

The consultant should also be prepared to present at public meetings on two occasions. In both cases, these will

be education forums, organized by the Newton Charter Review Commission:

- At the commencement of the project to describe the scope and planned outcomes
- At a time to be determined to present a collection of research findings as otherwise presented to the Commission during the regular course of work

1. Research

In order to properly fulfill its duties, the Commission will require background and benchmarking research to showcase on issues such as (but not limited to):

- Alternative approaches to government structure
- Models for roles and responsibilities within municipal government
- Centralized and local control in cities
- Elections and related issues

The Commission wishes to work with a consultant who has the knowledge and ability to provide examples and best practices from other governments (and from academic studies) within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and elsewhere in the United States.

Information will be provided by the Consultant to the Commission in a format to be jointly developed.

2. Facilitation

In some cases, the Commission may wish for the Consultant to act as a third-party facilitator to order to structure conversation in such a way that consensus may be achieved on issues of contention. The consultant should propose a means and a not-to-exceed budget for services on this topic, providing time and other assumptions for this service.

TIME COMMITMENT and CONTRACT PERIOD:

The consultant should expect the following in terms of time commitment:

- Attendance at one meeting per month, occasionally two when there will be important topics discussed in succession
- Time required: ~ 3 hours per meeting per month, ~ 10 - 20 hours research per month

The Commission intends to award a contract within thirty (30) days of receiving the proposal. It is expected that the selected consultant's work will begin immediately upon contract award and the project must be completed within twelve (12) months after execution of the contract.

SUBMISSION OF QUALIFICATIONS:

The Request for Proposal (RFP) response shall include at a minimum:

- An organizational chart illustrating the relationship of key personnel and the project manager.
- Include names, titles and relevant experience of all significant staff that will be involved in the project.
- Descriptions of three (3) similar projects completed by the firm's personnel who will be involved in this initiative. Please include contact information for references for each project.
- A well-defined and specific scope of services to accomplish the goals set forth in this RFP
- Examples of previous materials prepared for similar projects. These should include:
 - Economic development and/or business attraction plans
 - Outlines of marketing and outreach plans
 - Organizational and strategic reconfiguration plans
- Description of the previous experience (if any) by the firm's personnel with local government and organizational consulting. These should include descriptions of the specific results achieved and identify any obstacles to execution encountered by the client.
- A fee proposal identifying the professional hours and total fee per phase or task of the project.
- The body of the response (excluding references, project examples, prior project summaries and resumes), shall be no longer than 15 pages

To be considered, a copy of the firm's proposal and qualifications should be submitted electronically no later than 5 p.m. EST on _____, 2016 to:

Joshua Krintzman

Chair

Newton Charter Review Commission

1000 Commonwealth Ave

Newton MA 02459

The envelope must bear the name and address of the firm submitting the qualifications. All packages become property of the Commission. The Commission reserves the right to reject any and all bids as well as to choose not to pursue the marketing initiative at all.

The Commission will not be liable for any costs incurred by the respondents in replying to this RFP. The Commission is not liable for any costs for work or services performed by the selected consultant or firm prior to executing an Agreement.

Requests for further information or questions regarding this Request for Qualifications should be addressed in writing only to Joshua Krintzman (jkrintzman@newtonma.gov). Unauthorized contact regarding this Request for Proposals with any Commission employee or Commission member may result in disqualification. Any oral communication will be considered unofficial and non-binding. Submitters shall rely only on written addenda issued by Joshua Krintzman through direct contact with all vendors who submit intent to bid.