

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

OPC-RFP-2025-4

For

**Technical Consulting Services to Inform and Advise the Office of the People's Counsel for
the District of Columbia Regarding Energy Affordability**

Sponsored by the

Office of the People's Counsel for the District of Columbia

RFP Issue Date: October 16, 2024

Proposal Due Date: October 28, 2024

SECTION 1 - SCOPE OF WORK

I. Introduction

The Office of the People’s Counsel for the District of Columbia (“OPC” or “Office”), the statutory representative for District of Columbia utility ratepayers and consumers, pursuant to D.C. Official Code § 34-804, seeks technical services from qualified firms and individuals for its activities related to advocating the interests of District ratepayers in matters concerning energy affordability. This RFP is released pursuant to OPC’s contract and procurement authority (as delineated in D.C. Official Code §§ 34-804(c) and 34-912, as amended).

II. Background

The District of Columbia’s energy landscape has undergone significant change over the past two decades, including adopting a Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard, implementing energy choice, deploying Advanced Metering Infrastructure, and advancing solar energy solutions. Although consumers’ options for purchasing and generating energy have increased, many households across income levels continue to struggle with energy affordability issues. In addition to an unprecedented amount of arrearage from electric and gas consumers as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic, and the economic challenges faced as a result, the District has also seen its respective electric and gas utilities seek more frequent requests for rate increases from the Public Service Commission. Amid all these changes, OPC remains committed to meeting its mandate to ensure that DC residents have access to high-quality utility services that are safe, reliable, universally affordable, and environmentally sustainable, and therefore seeks solutions that enable equitable access to energy.

III. Tasks

OPC seeks a vendor capable of studying and developing a report on energy affordability for residential consumers in the District of Columbia. The purpose of the study is to define affordability as it relates to current and future utility consumers and propose recommendations to make the energy burden more affordable. The study should quantify the scope of the current energy burden, develop a survey of existing energy assistance and affordability programs that are available to support District residents, and assess and provide ways to mitigate the potential impact on the energy burden from wholesale market changes, and grid modernization, decarbonization, and other “future-looking” utility-related initiatives.

In addition to this, the vendor should review current utility affordability program rate structures in various jurisdictions across the country and suggest potentially feasible options based on the characteristics of the District and the needs of its residents.

The study will provide the demographic and geographic characteristics of residents impacted by energy affordability and will be updated on a bi-annual basis. The study will be used to help develop recommendations on how to improve District Government programming offered to residential consumers.

SECTION 2 – INDEPENDENT CAPACITY; NON-ASSIGNABILITY

The successful offeror and any agents and employees thereof shall, in the performance of work under the proposal and this RFP, act in an independent capacity and not as officers or employees of the District of Columbia government. The successful offeror shall not assign or transfer any interest under the contract resulting from this RFP without the prior written consent of OPC.

SECTION 3 – INDEMNIFICATION

The successful offeror agrees to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the Office and the District of Columbia government, its officers, employees, and agents from any and all claims, losses, or both accruing or resulting to persons, firms, or corporations who may be injured or damaged by the successful offeror in the performance of its duties and responsibilities under the proposal accepted by OPC and also from and against any liability—including costs and expenses—for the violation of proprietary rights, copyrights, or rights of privacy or confidentiality arising out of the publication, translation, reproduction, delivery, performance, use, or disposition of any data furnished pursuant to this engagement or based on any libelous or otherwise unlawful matter contained in such data.

SECTION 4 – ACCESS TO RECORDS

The successful offeror agrees that OPC, through its authorized agents and employees, shall have the right to examine and audit such books, records, and other documents in the possession or control of the successful offeror as necessary to verify the fees, charges, and expenses billed to the Office under this engagement.

SECTION 5 – CONFIDENTIALITY OF PROPOSALS, WORK PAPERS AND MATERIALS

The proposals filed in response to this RFP shall be considered public documents and will be available for public inspection upon receipt by OPC. The successful offeror agrees that the Office shall own and have unlimited right to all interim and final written work product and that the successful offeror shall not assert any rights or establish any claim under existing copyright, patent, or data law as to such material or processes. The successful offeror further agrees that upon request it will submit to the Office original or legible copies of all work product created by the successful offeror during the course of this engagement.

SECTION 6 – TERMS AND CONDITIONS

This RFP does not bind or otherwise commit OPC to enter into a contract or to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of a proposal in response to this request. OPC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received, to negotiate with all qualified sources, or to cancel or modify this RFP in whole or in part. OPC reserves the right to request additional written data, information, oral discussion, or presentations in support of any written proposal or portion thereof which is deemed necessary to clarify any aspect of a proposal.

SECTION 7 – TERMINATION OF AGREEMENT

It is understood and agreed that if, through any cause or for any reason, the successful offeror fails to fulfill in a timely and professional manner the obligations under the successful proposal or violates any of the terms of this RFP or contract entered into pursuant to this RFP, the Office shall have the right to terminate the contract by giving written notice of termination. In the event of such termination, all finished or unfinished work product prepared or being prepared pursuant to this engagement shall, at the option of the Office, become OPC's property and the successful offeror shall be entitled to receive just and equitable compensation for any reasonably satisfactory work performed to date.

SECTION 8 – RFP AVAILABILITY

A copy of the RFP may be obtained by e-mail or written request to:

Naunihal Singh Gumer
Director, Regulatory Finance
Office of the People's Counsel for the District of Columbia
655 15th Street, Suite 200
Washington, D.C. 20005
ngumer@opc-dc.gov

SECTION 9 – TIMING/DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

The times stated in this document refer to Eastern Standard Time (EST). **Submissions will be accepted and considered until a successful offeror has been selected.** Any proposals received after this deadline will not be considered. **One (1) electronic copy (email) must be submitted to:**

Naunihal Singh Gumer
Director, Regulatory Finance
Office of the People's Counsel for the District of Columbia

655 15th Street, Suite 200
Washington, D.C. 20005
ngumer@opc-dc.gov

SECTION 10– ELIGIBLE OFFERORS

To be eligible, the offeror must demonstrably possess the technical capabilities, competencies, and resources to perform the duties delineated in Section 1 (Scope of Work) of this RFP.

SECTION 11 – PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Proposals submitted in response to this request must meet the following conditions to be considered for selection. Faxed proposals will not be accepted under any circumstances.

PROPOSALS MUST BE SUBMITTED IN A MANNER THAT DOES NOT PRESENT ANY BENEFIT, KEEPSAKE, OR VALUE FOR MEMBERS OF THE REVIEW PANEL.

Proposals must begin with a cover page that clearly states the name of the offeror and the name and address of the company, as well as the telephone number, fax number, and e-mail address of the person who may be contacted directly regarding the proposal. Proposals must be signed by a principal, officer, or partner authorized to bind the offeror contractually. A proposal must be submitted in the format outlined herein with a Table of Contents. Pages of the proposal must be numbered.

SECTION 12 – SOURCE SELECTION

The Office will award the contract to the offeror that, in light of all factors, best meets the requirements of this RFP. Each proposal will be evaluated in accordance with the procedures set forth in this RFP. OPC’s selection of a successful offeror will be based on the Evaluation Criteria in Attachment A.

SECTION 13 – ANTICIPATED SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES¹

Deadline for submission of proposals:

October 28, 2024

¹ Dates are subject to change.

ATTACHMENT A

SECTION A: SPECIAL PROVISIONS

A.1 Preference for Local and Disadvantaged Business Enterprises or Businesses Operating in an Enterprise Zone

General: Pursuant to the provisions of D.C. Code § 2-218.43, OPC gives a preference to offerors that are certified by the District of Columbia Department of Small and Local Business Development (“DSLBD”) as having resident business ownership, being in a Local-Business Enterprise, being a Disadvantaged-Business Enterprise, or as operating in an Enterprise Zone. A copy of the certification acknowledgment letter must be submitted with the offeror’s submission.

In accordance with this law, the following preferences are awarded in evaluating an offeror’s proposal:

- Three points shall be awarded if the offeror is certified as a small business enterprise;
- Five points shall be awarded if the offeror is certified as resident-owned business;
- Ten points shall be awarded if the offeror is certified as a long-time resident business;
- Two points shall be awarded if the offeror is certified as a local-business enterprise;
Two points shall be awarded if the offeror is certified as a local-business enterprise with its principal office located in an enterprise zone;
- Two points shall be awarded if the offeror is certified as a disadvantaged-business enterprise; and
- Two points shall be awarded if the offeror is certified veteran-owned business Enterprise.

A Certified Business Enterprise is entitled to any or all of the preferences provided herein, but in no case shall a certified business enterprise be entitled to a preference of more than 10 points or a reduction in price of more than 12%.

Information: For information regarding the application process, contact DSLBD at the following address or telephone number:

Department of Small and Local Business Development
One Judiciary Square Building
441 - 4th Street, NW, 9th Floor, Suite 970 N
Washington, DC 20001
(202) 727-3900 (Telephone Number)
(202) 724-3786 (Facsimile Number)

Any offeror with Local-Business Enterprise or Disadvantaged-Business Enterprise certification as its joint venture or constituent entity shall be entitled to the applicable preference points provided for in D.C. Code § 2-218.43 (2001 Ed. & Supp. 2016) in direct proportion to the percentage of the effort to be performed by the Local-Business Enterprise or Disadvantaged-Business Enterprise. A copy of the certification acknowledgment letter must be submitted with the offeror's Proposal.

A.2 Time

Unless otherwise specified in this RFP, time, if stated in number of days, shall include Saturdays, Sundays and holidays.

A.3 Licensing, Accreditation, and Registration

The selected offeror must comply with all applicable District of Columbia and federal licensing, accreditation, and registration requirements and standards necessary for the performance of the contract.

A.4 Limitation of Authority

Only the Office or a person with prior written authority from the Office will have the express, implied, or apparent authority to alter, amend, modify, or waive any clause or condition of the contract. Furthermore, any alteration, amendment, modification, or waiver of any clause or condition of this RFP is not effective or binding unless made in writing and signed by OPC or its authorized representative.

A.5 Conformance with Laws

It will be the responsibility of the selected offeror to perform under the contract in conformance with all statutes, laws, codes, ordinances, regulations, rules, requirements, orders, and policies of governmental bodies—including, without limitation, the U.S. Government and the District of Columbia government; and it is the sole responsibility of the selected offeror to identify the statutes, laws, codes, ordinances, regulations, rules, requirements, orders, and policies that apply and their effect.

SECTION B: PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

B.1. List of Required Documentation

Offerors will be required to submit the following information with their proposals:

- a. An executive summary that provides an overview;
- b. A statement of the offeror's experience;
- c. A list of key individuals and their resumes;
- d. A list of credentials;
- e. A list of area(s) of expertise;
- f. A list of years of experience;
- g. A detailed cost and price proposal; and
- h. A CBE Utilization Plan (if applicable).

B.2 Work Plan(s)

Offerors must briefly describe clearly and specifically their proposals for carrying out the responsibilities associated with the Scope of Work in Section 1 of this RFP. Additionally, offerors should be prepared to clearly and completely describe in detail their proposals as soon as possible after the contract award, including a timeline for all deliverables. The timeline must identify the key milestones, tasks, activities, and events outlined in the Scope of Work.

B.3 Prior Experience and Qualifications

Offerors must describe their prior experience and qualifications with respect to experience with the tasks, as discussed in Section 1 of this RFP.

B.4 Personnel

Offerors must identify the persons who will perform tasks outlined in the Scope of Work set forth in Section 1 of this RFP and provide a detailed resume for each individual that describes the qualifications applicable to the performance of the tasks for which the individual will be responsible. Please include an organizational chart showing reporting relationships of team personnel. OPC must be notified of any personnel changes if individuals assigned to work on this project(s) are relieved of their responsibilities or reassigned. Offerors shall designate one individual as the project manager and this individual shall be responsible for project management, reporting, coordination, and accountability for the entire project.

B.5 Budget

Offerors must justify all costs in terms of activities and objects of expenditure to ensure the costs are reasonable and necessary to the project, as outlined in Section 1 (Scope of Work) of this RFP. Financial resources must be adequately and appropriately allocated among cost categories in a

cost-effective and prudent business manner to accomplish the RFP objectives and activities. Services to be purchased from other agencies, subcontractors (including any amounts subcontracted to CBEs), consultants, and others must be specified.

Proposals must provide the total charges to be provided for the services rendered in the following format listing the hourly rate for every person.

<u>NAME</u>	<u>BILLING RATE</u>	<u>HOURS</u>	<u>EXPENSES</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
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Partner/Principal

Project Manager (if any)

All others (by name)

All other fees or expenses

Each proposal must contain the following statement:

The Office of the People’s Counsel shall pay (offeror) as full compensation for all authorized work performed and accepted including all costs, fees and expenses, an amount not to exceed \$ _____.

The Office reserves the right to disallow expenses charged for this engagement if OPC determines such expenses are unreasonable. The successful offeror must make every effort to minimize the cost of hotels, meals, and transportation.

B.6 Statement Regarding Potential Conflicts of Interest

Each offeror must identify any relationships between itself or its employees and the companies under the jurisdiction of the Public Service Commission of the District of Columbia or any parent, subsidiary, or affiliate of such companies. The extent, nature, and time aspects must be identified. If there are or have been no such relationships, a statement to that effect shall be included in the proposal. Failure to provide the statement on potential conflicts of interest will automatically disqualify the offeror.

B.7 Employer Identification Information

Each offeror must provide the Office with its 9-digit Federal Employer Identification Number (“EIN”) or Social Security Number (“SSN”) if offeror is an individual.

B.8 False Statements

By submitting a proposal to the Office, offerors understand, agree, and certify that submitting a proposal with a false statement is a material breach of contract and shall void the submitted

proposal and any resulting contract, and the offeror shall be removed from all future contracting opportunities with OPC.