

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS #2018-027

HURRICANE MARIA PLANNING STUDY

CITY OF HOLYOKE, MA

Introduction and Background

Hurricane Maria devastated the Island of Puerto Rico in the summer of 2017. Holyoke has deep ties to the island and approximately two-thousand individuals transitioned between Holyoke and Puerto Rico when the storm eliminated critical infrastructure such as power, water, basic public services.

Holyoke is a tightly-knit community of 42,000 residents, half of whom can trace their history back to Puerto Rico. This intertwined network of families and friends made Holyoke one of the top locations for individuals and families seeking respite from the hardship of surviving the aftermath of Maria. In these two-thousand individual stories, including approximately 200 permanent new students to the Holyoke Public Schools, are wisdom and lessons that should be gathered and honored. Not only is this a valuable history for the City of Holyoke and its island twin, but the processes that the local government and non-profits had to enact to accommodate that large of an influx of individuals is an invaluable teaching tool for future cities and towns. Capturing the information from Hurricane Maria will lead to better public policy for accommodating future waves of climate migrants.

This Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is launched in the context of the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness program, which the Commonwealth of Massachusetts established in 2016 to assist municipalities in efforts to adapt to the impacts of Climate Change in the 21st Century. Holyoke has been a leader in climate mitigation, through its efforts to reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions and its commitment to obtaining 100% of its power from renewable energy sources, and is seeking the services of a consultant who can assist in capturing the information and wisdom from Hurricane Maria survivors and responders to allow Holyoke to lead in developing an understanding for what climate adaptation will mean in an era of climate-driven human migration. Key to the success of developing a humane response to migration events in Holyoke and the Commonwealth is an understanding of the ways in which organizations and individuals can complement one another in efforts to respond to the needs of climate-migration events.

Holyoke possesses a rich, vibrant culture that is unique in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Arguably one of its most defining features is that it is the northernmost diaspora community and the community with highest per capita concentration of Puerto Ricans outside of the island. The connections between Puerto Rico and Holyoke a real and need to be understood as we move into an uncertain climate future, as incidents in Puerto Rico will have impacts on families and individuals in Holyoke and vice versa. Developing a document that creates best management practices for providing assistance to migrating individuals in the aftermath of climate events is vital to planning for future events at a local and regional scale. Despite the geographical distance between Holyoke, Puerto Rico and other diaspora communities, the deep familial and cultural bonds linking these communities together will continue to influence disaster responses in future climate-related events. The challenge of Holyoke's Hurricane Maria Study is to build an understanding of the response

requirements of local governments, non-profits, and individuals who are working to provide a humane supportive response after natural disasters.

To that end, the City of Holyoke has identified five avenues of research that need to be pursued in order to gain a greater understanding of how to respond to the issue of climate-driven migration. These are addressed in the following sections of the RFQ, but are generally identified as the following:

1. People and families in Holyoke who opened their doors to families leaving Puerto Rico after Maria. What were their needs, were their needs met? ("e.g.: People in Holyoke who opened doors, what were their needs?")
2. People and families from Puerto Rico who came to Holyoke after Maria. What were their needs and were their needs met? What were their needs and what would have made life easier? ("e.g.: People from Puerto Rico, what were their needs, were they met and what would have made it easier?")
3. Non-profits, new & old, what were their needs as they worked to provide assistance to families arriving in Holyoke from Puerto Rico and what did they have, versus what they needed, to provide assistance? ("e.g.: Non-profits new & old how could resources provided have been different?")
4. What services did local government provide? How did the City of Holyoke meet demands of families and individuals, what could the City of Holyoke have done differently to meet needs? ("e.g.: City of Holyoke, how did we meet demand, what could we have done?")
5. What services were provided in Puerto Rico to assist in transition? How can local governments learn to meet demand of migrating populations?"

Organization of the Request for Qualifications

This RFQ is organized into the following sections:

Section 1: General Proposal Instructions

Section 2: Scope of Requested Services and Avenues of Research

Section 3: Proposal Requirements

Section 4: Proposal Evaluation Criteria and Notice of Award

SECTION 1: GENERAL PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS

1.0 Contract Duration:

The City is inviting qualifications for the Hurricane Maria study from January 25, 2018, to June 28, 2019. Funds are awarded by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and must be expended by June 28, 2019.

1.1 Rights Reserved by the City

The City reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to pursue any or all actions it deems in the City's best interests regarding this Request for Proposals Qualifications (RFQ) including, but not limited to:

- Issue addenda to the RFQ;
- Request additional information, clarification, in-person interviews or site visits from the Proposers;
- Extend the deadline for submitting proposals;
- Withdraw this RFQ;
- Modify and reissue this RFQ;
- Reject any and all proposals;
- Select the Proposer without further discussion or negotiation;
- Issue subsequent RFQ's for the same, similar, or related services.
- Amend the Plan of Service resulting from this RFQ;
- Terminate the Agreement resulting from this RFQ and
- Take any other action the City of Holyoke deems in its best interest.

The City reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals, to waive irregularities and technicalities, and to request re-submission.

It is understood and agreed that no contract may be assigned, sublet, or transferred without the written consent of the Chief Procurement Officer, City of Holyoke, MA.

1.2 Schedule for Request for Qualifications

- RFQ released — 12/3/18 after 10 :00 AM
- Deadline for Proposers to submit written questions to City - 12/11/18 before 2:00 PM
- Deadline to for City to respond to written questions-12/14/18 before 2:00 PM
- Proposers to submit qualifications-12/20/18 by 2:00 PM
- Proposers will be contacted to give exact time of Interviews – on or about 12/27/18
- Company presentations / interviews if requested — 1/9/18
- Execution of contract with selected firm-1/25/18

1.3 Questions Regarding the RFQ

Vendors who request a clarification of the RFQ requirements may submit written questions via email to the Chief Procurement Officer, Lori J. Belanger at belangerl@holyoke.org. Written copies of all questions and answers will be provided to all vendors who have received or requested the RFQ. Responses to questions will be sent to all vendors who request a proposal as listed above.

Include in your document via email a contact name, phone number, e-mail address, page and item number of the item in question.

1.4 Interview Date

Interviews will be scheduled held at 20 Korean Veterans Plaza, Suite 403, Holyoke, MA. The interviews will be limited to 30 minutes. The Chief Procurement Officer will contact proposers with the specific presentation and interview time. The proposers should present an overview of their proposal, and the evaluation team will ask questions.

1.5 Point of Contact with the City

The Chief Procurement Officer is the sole point of contact for this selection. Throughout the duration of the procurement process, all questions and other communications concerning the procurement are to be directed, via email, to both the contacts listed above. Unauthorized contact regarding the procurement with other City staff after issuance of the RFQ will disqualify the Proposer.

The City shall not be responsible for Proposers adjusting their response to this RFQ based on any oral instructions made by any employees or officers of the City regarding the RFQ, instructions, or agreement documents. All changes to the RFQ will be in the form of a written addendum that will be furnished to all vendors who are listed with the City as having received the proposal.

1.6 Revisions and/or Addenda to the RFQ

The City reserves the right to revise the RFQ and/or to issue addenda to the RFQ. The City also reserves the right to cancel or to reissue the RFQ in whole or in part, prior to execution of an agreement. In the event it becomes necessary to revise any part of the RFQ, addenda will be provided to all parties on record with the Chief of Procurement of the City as having received the RFQ from the City.

Each Proposer shall acknowledge receipt of all addenda, and include such addenda in their proposal.

1.7 Withdrawal or Revision of Proposal Prior to Proposal Opening

Proposals may be withdrawn, altered and/or resubmitted at any time prior to the submittal date.

Notice of pre-submittal withdrawal will be in writing over the signature of the Proposal to the Chief Procurement Officer of the City. If by email, written confirmation over the signature of Proposer must have been mailed and postmarked on or before the submittal date.

Withdrawn Proposals may be resubmitted up to the submittal date and time, provided that they are then fully in conformance with these general terms and conditions.

1.8 Costs to Prepare Proposals

The City will not be liable for any costs incurred by the Proposer in responding to the RFQ, presentations or any other activities related to responding to this RFQ.

1.9 Failure to Respond

The Respondent is specifically notified that failure to comply with any material part of the RFQ may result in determination that your bid is non-responsive and will be rejected. Proposers are responsible for responding to all requested items contained in the RFQ.

1.10 Obligation to Contract

This RFQ shall not be construed by any party as an agreement of any kind between the City and such party. This RFQ does not obligate the City of Holyoke to accept any proposal, negotiate with any Proposer, award a proposal or proceed with the delivery of service described in this RFQ. For reference, a sample contract is attached to this RFQ.

1.11 Acknowledgement and Acceptance of Conditions

Submission of a proposal shall constitute acknowledgement and acceptance of all the terms and conditions contained in this RFQ, its attachments, addenda, or clarification and the proposed agreement. Submittal of a proposal signifies the proposer's commitment to provide the proposed service if awarded the contract. The proposals are to be firm for a period of ninety (90) calendar days from the date the proposal is submitted. Proposals may not be altered after submittal, except in response to the City's request for clarification.

1.12 Errors and Omissions

The City is not responsible for any Proposer's errors or omissions.

1.13 Submission of Proposals

Proposers must submit one (1) original Proposal in a sealed envelope. The Proposal must be marked with a notation: Original Proposal 2018-027 Request for Proposals for Hurricane Maria Study Planning Consultant, and the name of the organization submitting the proposal.

The original Proposal must be signed by authorized representative of your firm who can legally bind the proposer to a contractual relationship. The separately sealed Technical Proposal must each be marked with a notation:

Submittal of three (3) copies of the Proposal is required.

MANAGEMENT FEE'S (E.G., OVERHEAD COSTS) CANNOT BE INCLUDED IN THE PROPOSAL.

Proposals are limited to a maximum of 20 pages with the exception of representations and certifications, double sided.

All responses to these proposals must be in writing and in the form set forth in this RFQ and delivered to:

Chief Procurement Officer – Lori J. Belanger
City of Holyoke
Office of Procurement
536 Dwight Street #15
Holyoke, MA 01104
413-322-5650

Proposals will be received until 2:00 PM on or before 12/20/2018 at the Office of Procurement. The deadline will be strictly observed unless the City determines it is necessary to extend based upon responses. Proposals delivered to any other office or location will be rejected as non-responsive. If at the time of the scheduled RFQ submission, City Hall or the Office of Procurement is closed due to uncontrolled events such as fire, snow, ice, wind, or building evacuation, the RFQ submission will be postponed until 2:00 PM eastern standard time on the next business day on which they are open.

Proposals shall be delivered by US Mail, Federal Express or other such service or by hand. Delivery by facsimile and e-mail will not be accepted. It is the Proposer's sole responsibility to ensure that its proposal is received at the proper location at or prior to the deadline.

Submittal of a proposal will serve as prima facie evidence that the Proposer is fully aware of all conditions affecting the performance of services under any resulting Agreement.

1.14 Investigation of Proposer's Ability to Perform Services

The City shall have the right, but not the obligation, to perform an investigation and review of each proposer's ability to perform the work required. Each Proposer must agree to cooperate with such an investigation. Such cooperation by Proposers shall apply to the verification of the Proposer's capability and experience in the provision of services and any other component of work that may be required under this procurement.

1.15 Required City Language around Insurance

See attached sample contract for the understanding of required language in all contracts that the City may execute.

1.16 Minimum Proposer Qualifications

The Holyoke Office of Conservation and Sustainability will evaluate the qualifications of Proposers to provide the services requested in this RFQ. In evaluating proposer's qualifications, City will review the proposer's record of performance. In evaluating proposer's qualifications, City shall consider:

- The proposer or team must possess experience in working with communities with similar challenges, opportunities, and demographics as those of Holyoke's.
- The proposer or team must demonstrate expertise in designing and implementing demographic analyses that are accessible to a broad range of community partners.
- The proposer or team must demonstrate experience in working with a broad range of community stakeholders in soliciting feedback for community planning as well as fostering stakeholder leadership and coordination to deliver upon planning objectives.
- The proposer or team must have a robust working understanding and experience in public finance, public policy, and administration.
- The proposer or team must have an understanding of disaster response policies in both the continental united states and the island of Puerto Rico.
- List of three (3) references that can provide testimony to the proposer's ability to perform services as outlined in this agreement.

1.17 Preferred Proposer Qualifications:

- Bilingual in English and Spanish
- Cultural Competence in Puerto Rican/Latino communities
- Master's Degree in Planning, Economic Development, or related field.

All Vendors must submit their resumes of all Key Personnel who will be involved in the Proposal.

1.18 Selection Process

The selection process will be a "Qualifications Based Selection." Selection will be based on the designer's qualifications, experience and commitment of the lead and support individuals proposed for this project, project references, and overall project approach. To be considered, proposals must be responsive (complete in all material respects) and meet all minimum requirements. The City intends to select the most advantageous proposal that the City determines will best assist the City in reaching its goal.

The City shall award the proposal by written notice to the selected proposer. The City, in its sole discretion, may condition an award on successful negotiation of revisions to the proposers Plan of Service as specified by the City in the evaluation. However, proposers shall not specify items for negotiation in their proposals or otherwise condition their proposals on negotiation of requirements in the RFQ, including requirements of the agreement. Inclusion of any such condition in a proposal shall be cause for rejection of the proposal.

A selection committee will review the submittals on behalf of the City. At its option, the committee may choose to interview one or more firms prior to finalizing and selecting a finalist. The committee will rate the submittals as to advantageousness to the committee and forward this rating to the Chief Procurement Officer who will then negotiate a service contract with the top-rated consultant so as to maximize the project value within the available budget. Upon successful completion, the negotiated contract will then be subject to the approval of the Mayor. Should negotiations with the higher rated consultant fail; the Chief Procurement Officer will then negotiate with the next lower rated consultant.

Submissions that fail to meet the requirements of this Request for Qualification's, which are incomplete, conditional, or obscure, or which contain additions not called for, erasures, alterations, or irregularities of any kind, or in which errors occur may be rejected.

1.19 Budget and Fees

It is the goal of the City to obtain the maximum value and overall project success within this available budget. Retaining a firm that is willing to work collaboratively with the City and its departments is essential to achieving this goal. A maximum budget of \$149,825 has been dedicated to this project through the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the City of Holyoke. The City of Holyoke through the Chief Procurement Officer will negotiate a final fee for professional services rendered hereunder.

SECTION 2: SCOPE OF REQUESTED SERVICES AND AVENUES OF RESEARCH

2.1 City's Goals and Objectives for the Request for Qualifications

The City of Holyoke is soliciting a Request for Qualifications from consultants with technical and cultural competency to examine the City of Holyoke's response to Hurricane Maria and the ways in which local governments and non-profits coordinated efforts to meet the needs of families and individuals as they were transitioning out of Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria. Research shall address the following:

1. People and families in Holyoke who opened their doors to families leaving Puerto Rico after Maria. What were their needs, were their needs met? ("e.g.: People in Holyoke who opened doors, what were their needs?")
2. People and families from Puerto Rico who came to Holyoke after Maria. What were their needs and were their needs met? What were their needs and what would have made life easier? ("e.g.: People from Puerto Rico, what were their needs, were they met and what would have made it easier?")
3. Non-profits, new & old, what were their needs as they worked to provide assistance to families arriving in Holyoke from Puerto Rico and what did they have, versus what they needed, to provide assistance? ("e.g.: Non-profits new & old how could resources provided have been different?")
4. What services did local government provide? How did the City of Holyoke meet demands of families and individuals, what could the City of Holyoke have done differently to meet needs? ("e.g.: City of Holyoke, how did we meet demand, what could we have done?")
5. What services were provided in Puerto Rico to assist in transition? How can local governments learn to meet demand of migrating populations?"

2.2 Specific Deliverables

A. Analysis

1. Identification of Stakeholder Groups, Active Agencies, Affected Individuals and Community Spokespersons
 - 1.1.The Consultant will work to identify stakeholder groups, agencies, community leaders and specific individuals who can, collectively, portray the individual and institutional scope of migration between Holyoke and Puerto Rico in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria. Identified groups and individuals will need to be engaged in a way that elicits details that cannot be captured from statistical analysis alone. To this end, the Consultant will conduct the following tasks to create a humane representation of individual and group responses to the stress of migrating during a climate-driven catastrophe:
 - 1.1.1.Detailed demographic analysis of migration trends between Holyoke and Puerto Rico, after Hurricanes Maria and Irma, will need to be collected and placed into context with other regions of the continental United States that served as safe havens in the wake of Maria.
 - 1.1.2.Statistics on individuals who migrated between Puerto Rico and Holyoke who chose to remain in Holyoke will be collected
 - 1.1.3.Statistics on individuals who migrated between Puerto Rico and Holyoke who chose to depart Holyoke for another diaspora community in the Continental United States will be collected
 - 1.1.4.Statistics on individuals who migrated between Puerto Rico and Holyoke who returned to Puerto Rico will be collected

- 1.1.5. Statistics on individuals who migrated between Holyoke from another diaspora community will need to be collected
 - 1.1.6. Students and families of students will be identified
 - 1.1.7. Local social service providers actively involved in the response will be identified
 - 1.1.8. Local politicians actively involved in the response will be identified,
 - 1.1.9. Local governmental agencies and state/federal agencies actively involved on the response will be identified
 - 1.1.10. At all stages, a careful attention to detail will be necessary, as this RFQ is also looking to identify power narratives and powerful voices that can convey, in an undetermined medium, the emotional toll and personal victories of Maria survivors.
 - 1.1.11. Moreover, the intent of this work is to create a template that other communities can use to address climate-driven migration events.
2. The Consultant chosen will use interviews with identified stakeholder groups to isolate systems that contributed to migration patterns once the crisis began. Through contact with individuals and agencies, effort will be made to capture decision-points that caused individuals to leave the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. During this interview process, the following data should be obtained:
- 2.1. Immediately available resources that enhanced individual, neighborhood or community resiliency
 - 2.2. Resources that were later provided that enhanced individual, neighborhood or community resiliency
 - 2.3. Resources that did not arrive but were invented that enhanced individual, neighborhood or community resiliency
 - 2.4. Resources that were lacking that were absolutely critical
 - 2.5. Personal requirements for staying, personal requirements for migrating
 - 2.6. Documents that were necessary, documents that were not attainable
3. Conduct SWOT Analysis
- 3.1. Strengths: identify current agencies, including public and private entities, that were able to respond to needs.
 - 3.2. Weaknesses: what challenges must be overcome to meet the needs of individuals migrating after a climate disaster? Is there a lack of information? Is there a lack of funding? Are there bureaucratic barriers? How can we address these issues? What are the limits to a community's ability to respond?
 - 3.3. Opportunities: What niche can Cities and Towns occupy, regionally and nationally, in responses to climate disaster? How can we use local knowledge to improve the response process? How can we standardize and improve upon Holyoke's response in 2017? How can we meet the needs all income levels? How can Holyoke serve as a template for other communities in future events?
 - 3.4. Threats: How much of a response can be given until fatigue becomes a factor? What is a reasonable limit to a community's ability to provide support and how can we maximize assistance without exhausting local communities?
 - 3.5. Identify opportunities for partnerships with state, federal, local and non-governmental agencies.

4. Identification of Support Networks for Individuals and Communities

4.1. The Consultant will be responsible for developing an understanding of the process by which individuals and organizations navigated the process of integrating evacuees into the community as well as resources that were accessed throughout the process of serving the needs of evacuees. During this task, an understanding the following should be obtained:

- 4.1.1. Support networks that activated to enhance individual, neighborhood or community resiliency
- 4.1.2. Support networks on the island that facilitated passage off of the island
- 4.1.3. Support networks in Holyoke that facilitated passage into the community
- 4.1.4. Support networks, whether formal or informal, that arose to facilitate the process of transitioning into and out of disaster affected areas
- 4.1.5. Obstacles and barriers that arose from the individual and organizational perspective that created difficulties for people seeking refuge from the storm; these could be either geographic, bureaucratic, institutional or cultural barriers, the goal is to understand obstacles to safe passage and integration
- 4.1.6. Infrastructure failures that resulted in the departure/arrival of residents fleeing Maria
- 4.1.7. Hard infrastructure that proved crucial to allowing the community to rebound from the initial damage of Hurricane Maria
- 4.1.8. Nature-based solutions that enhanced quality of life during the recovery period

B. Qualitative Analysis: Collection of Narratives from Individuals and Agencies

1. The Consultant will need the professional ability to respectfully engage survivors to identify the needs of the individual. It cannot be stressed enough that this project seeks to identify and develop relatable case studies that follow individuals and/or families through the entire process of their survivorship with the intent of adding to the collective knowledge we, as a society, will need to accommodate climate migrants as the 21st century moves inexorably into disruptive processes of climate change.
2. This will involve interviews with affected family members in Holyoke, interviews with individuals who came to Holyoke to stay, and interviews with individuals who stayed with friends or family in Holyoke in the aftermath of the storm. Interviews will be conducted both on-site, in Holyoke and in Puerto Rico, in order to fully capture the extent to which individuals were required to make decisions and how realities on the ground shaped their ability to act with agency in a crisis situation. Relying on the human element of this event and obtaining detailed histories of the ways in which societies become strained after a catastrophic disaster.
3. Generation of case studies based upon qualitative analysis

C. Communication and Collaboration

1. Hold a minimum of 6 public meetings and/or charrettes to engage and involve the community in planning efforts.
2. Identify resident, governmental (state and local), institutional (NGO and private) stakeholders for inclusion in a Steering Committee relating to Holyoke and Puerto Rico's response to Hurricane Maria.

3. Puerto Rico Coordination

- 3.1. Identify key stakeholders and assets with respect to one another and identify gaps in individual capacity that can be filled to increase resiliency
- 3.2. Meet with stakeholders to develop an assessment of gaps that local governments in Massachusetts can fill to support disaster response in Puerto Rico
- 3.3. Create best management practices in English and Spanish to steer local objectives, advise program investment, and foster cross-collaboration amongst parties operating in post-disaster response environment.
- 3.4. Create cross-cutting case study within the Hurricane Maria Study specifically for the Puerto Rican Community that provides action items and recommendations for partnership and funding strategies, based on feedback from stakeholders and officials.

D. Document Deliverables

1. A formal report, in English and Spanish, and presentation of the Maria Study with clear demonstration that it has achieved all the Specific Deliverables outlined above.
2. A guidebook of best practices derived from formal report for local, non-profit and state decision makers to adopt for their community needs, in English and Spanish.
3. Ten (10) hard copies of each formal report and one (1) electronic copy of each in original editable software format (word processing software rather than PDF).
4. Video and audio archive of interviews with individuals and institutions for archival purposes
5. An artistic statement that weaves together the multiple narratives of survivors of Hurricane Maria
6. 100 executive summaries (double sided English and Spanish) with concise recommendations for community leaders

SECTION 3: PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

3.1. Proposal

- ❖ Cover letter (signed by the Proposer's designated representative authorized to bind the proposal)
- ❖ Organizational Narrative (recommended length 1-2 pages)
 - Provide a brief overview that addresses your organizational structure. This should include:
 - The organization's governance and leadership structure
 - The organization's mission or vision, values and strategic priorities
 - Key metrics the organization currently uses to define success in current educational operations over the past 3 years
- ❖ Management Team (recommended length 1-2 pages)
 - Please provide a brief biography (i.e., 1/3 pages or less per person) of the key staff likely to deliver these services and include up-to-date resumes (as attachments) for all proposed staff. The biographies should describe the individual's qualifications to deliver the services described in your proposal, summarizing their experience, skills, and training. Biographies and attached resumes do not count against page limits.
- ❖ Timeline (recommended length: 1-2 pages)
 - Develop a launch timeline that explains the key actions steps, dates and owners that your organization would undertake.
- ❖ Analysis (recommended length: 1-2 pages)
 - Describe local and regional conditions pertinent to the diaspora community and Holyoke's position within that community.
 - Describe local and regional conditions pertinent to the island of Puerto Rico that shapes migration between Puerto Rico, Holyoke and other diaspora communities.
- ❖ Fostering Communication and Collaboration (recommended length: 1-2 pages)
 - Describe how your organization intends to conduct outreach and public charrettes/meetings.
 - Describe how your organization intends to identify and collaborate with stakeholders in Holyoke and Puerto Rico to reach into community leadership for data collection.
- ❖ Autonomy and/or Contract Language (recommended length: 1-2 pages)
 - Include any contract language that you would like to propose.
 - Describe any autonomy provisions that are essential to your success.
 - Attachments do not count against the page limit.
- ❖ References
 - Provide the names and contact information for:
 - 2 administrative-level references, preferably one being in western Massachusetts and Puerto Rico, in which they are knowledgeable about the set of services the organization would provide in this scope of services
 - At least 1 partner with whom your organization has worked in a bilingual capacity with representatives in diaspora communities and in Puerto Rico

SECTION 4: PROPOSAL COMPARATIVE EVALUATION CRITERIA AND NOTICE OF AWARD

The following comparative evaluation criteria will be those utilized in the selection process. They are presented as a guide in understanding the City requirements and expectations and are not presented in order of importance. Proposers are solely responsible for completely responding to all requests and requirements of this RFQ.

The scale used will be: highly advantageous, advantageous, not advantageous, not acceptable.

The categories are:

- ❖ Experience and Work on Related Planning Projects and/or in Similar Communities
- ❖ Community Engagement Experience and Strategy
- ❖ Planning and Analysis Experience and Strategy

Preference given to proposers:

- ❖ With experience working in planning and disaster response, especially in Western Massachusetts and Puerto Rico
- ❖ With experience working in and demonstrating cultural competence in a demographic population similar to Holyoke's.

4.1 Evaluation of Technical Qualifications

4.1.1. Experience and Related Planning Projects and/or in Similar Conditions

- ❖ Highly Advantageous: Applicant possesses broad experience in working with communities that match Holyoke's demographic conditions, challenges, and opportunities and has successfully conducted very similar research and planning projects in the past in multiple jurisdictions simultaneously.
- ❖ Advantageous: Applicant possesses broad experience in working with communities that match Holyoke's demographic conditions, challenges, and opportunities and/or has successfully conducted very similar research and planning projects in the past in one jurisdiction at a time.
- ❖ Not Advantageous: Applicant possesses limited experience in working with communities similar to Holyoke and/or has conducted somewhat similar research or planning projects in the past.
- ❖ Not Acceptable: Applicant possesses no experience in working with similar communities and has not conducted research and planning projects.

4.1.2. Community Engagement Experience and Strategy

- ❖ Highly Advantageous: Applicant possesses experience in community outreach and engagement, including in the design of academic studies and research plans similar to the Holyoke Maria Study, and clearly communicates an effective strategy for stakeholder identification and engagement to ensure its long-term success.

- ❖ Advantageous: Applicant possesses experience in community outreach and clearly communicates an effective strategy for stakeholder identification and engagement.
- ❖ Not Advantageous: Applicant possesses limited experience in community outreach and/or communicates a strategy for stakeholder identification and engagement.
- ❖ Not Acceptable: Applicant possesses no experience in community outreach and does not communicate a strategy for stakeholder identification and engagement.

4.1.3. Planning and Analysis Experience and Strategy

- ❖ Highly Advantageous: Applicant possesses broad experience in data analysis, including evaluating economic conditions and identifying metrics to measure project success.
- ❖ Advantageous: Applicant possesses some experience in data analysis, including evaluating economic conditions and/or identifying metrics to measure project success.
- ❖ Not Advantageous: Applicant possesses minimal experience in data analysis, including evaluating economic conditions and/or identifying metrics to measure project success.
- ❖ Not Acceptable: Applicant has no or negligible experience in data analysis.