Request for Proposal to Commission a National Literature Review on the Economic Impacts of Blight on Communities across America and the Development of Metrics for Measuring the Economic Impacts of Blight

Proposed by Keep America Beautiful Affiliates through the State Leaders Council and Big Cities Council
December 16, 2013

Background

Keep America Beautiful’s (KAB) national office works closely with groups within its national network of 1200 affiliates and partners across the country. Two of these groups, the State Leaders Council, comprised of twenty-four statewide affiliates and the Big Cities Council, comprised of executive directors of large cities, are offering the following proposal. The goal of both these groups is to build and sustain vibrant communities that are socially connected, environmentally healthy and economically sound. KAB is pleased to support the proposal of these two groups to conduct this research project.

Objective

From 2007-2009, Keep America Beautiful (KAB) invested in the advancement of research specific to their litter prevention activities by commissioning a litter study which included a literature review. The proposed project would strengthen our collective research by going beyond litter and examining various other components of blight in our communities. The proposed Literature Review would compile existing research, findings and literature related to economic impacts of blight. Blight includes litter; illegal dumping; vacant, unkempt lots; abandoned buildings; buildings with code violations; abandoned vehicles in the public right of way and on private property.

For individual affiliates to effectively build vibrant communities; we must also conduct fund development and education efforts targeting both stakeholders and the general public. The entire affiliate network would greatly benefit from being able to reference measure and articulate the economic impacts of blight on our communities particularly as we work to:

1) Develop sustainable sources of income to work on these issues,
2) Educate our stakeholders of the importance of our role in building vibrant communities, and
3) Promote a strategic path forward to achieve our shared mission locally.

The Literature Review would be of national relevance to not only the KAB Network but also partnering organizations in various social sectors including those that focus on community and economic development initiatives. This information needs to be able to enhance the affiliates’, and the cities they represent, federal, state and regional applications for funding, provide information to cities to support direct and indirect match requirements for funding, and increase partnerships.

The State Leaders Council and Big Cities Council have assigned a working group that will serve as the fund development arm for the program, review the proposals and make final selections as to the consultant to conduct the Literature Review.
I. Scope of Services/Outcomes

In consideration of a fee specified in this Request for Proposal (RFP), Contractor shall provide all labor, material and supervision necessary to perform the following services:

The Literature Review would compile existing research, findings and literature related to economic impacts of blight. Blight includes litter; illegal dumping; vacant, unkempt lots; abandoned buildings; buildings with code violations; graffiti; abandoned vehicles in the public right of way and on private property. The consultant would also identify proven metrics for measuring blight.

II. Executive Summary

Prepare a two page executive summary that captures the literature review findings and offer methods that Affiliates can use to quantify the public and private cost associated with neighborhood blight.

III. Indicators and Measurement Methods

Establish a clear definition of blight and define that definition in relationship to KAB’s guiding principles.

Describe a process to help KAB affiliates measure the local or state impacts of economic, environmental and social benefits that enhance community sustainability. Anchor the research in processes that demonstrate the ways in which communities define and measure success in their efforts to reduce blight.

IV. Identify Metrics for Measuring Blight

The Committee would prefer for the Consultant to select from a mix of evaluation methods the methodologies the researchers believe offer the best ways to measure and monitor blight.

Help KAB affiliates begin to quantify the public and private costs associated with neighborhood blight.

Consider the institutional impacts of blight on city property taxes, land development and the standard ways communities use United State Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and United State Department of Environmental Protection Agency grants to create Land Banks, Tax Management Districts, Community Development Corporations and other economic incentives to address ecological and economic conditions. Offer suggestions on how KAB affiliates can support the National Objectives of these various funding sources.

Produce a formula from the literature studies that will inexpensively measure progress year after year.

Teach KAB affiliates how to capture and apply identified metrics; and share ideas for measuring success.
V. **Key Elements**

a. **Literature Review**
   1. Identify literature and studies that link blight and economic development
   2. Each study referenced should have a short synopsis of contents. No more than two paragraphs.
   3. Identify discrepancies in referenced research in the literature
   4. Identify gaps in the research
   5. Evaluate policy implications
   6. Discuss differences and similarities in urban, suburban, and rural communities.

b. **Identification and development of metrics to measure economic impacts of blight**

VI. **Qualifications**

A Contractor must provide the following information about their firm in the following order:

- A cover letter of transmittal indicating the Contractor’s intent to respond to the RFP, signed by an officer of the contractor and including all contact information necessary (phone, fax, email, web site, etc.).

- A history of the firm including number of years in business, locations of operation, number of full time employees (not subcontractors), areas of expertise and membership in professional associations.

- Specific examples of projects, especially those that show its experience in this industry.

- A list of people who would be primary contacts involved in this project, including their titles and experience.

- Details of the quality control measures the firm uses to ensure reliable and accurate data collection and analysis of results and what data protection/disaster recovery practices the company has in place.

- The same information as listed in the above five points for any subcontractors you would be using to complete this project (sample providers, research providers, call centers, etc.).

- A detailed outline of how the company would approach this project, rationale to support that approach, and the steps in the process from beginning to end.

- Four references that can speak to the firm's research capabilities, and specifically to its experience in this industry.

- Cost breakdown as outlined in the following section.
By submitting this RFP Contractor certifies that they are qualified to complete this work and are competent to perform the work specified.

VII. **Cost Breakdown**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Literature Review</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification and development of metrics to measure economic</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>impacts of blight</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of report preparation</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Cost as Necessary to complete this project</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

VIII. **Evaluation Criteria and Allotted Points**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Criteria</th>
<th>Allotted Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>History of Firm</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Qualifications and Capability</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Details of Contractors approach to literature review</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Details of approach to measuring economic impact</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creativity and Innovation</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Findings</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Points</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IX. **Timeline**

RFP Publication December 16
Contractor’s written questions due January 31
Keep America Beautiful Affiliates written responses posted February 14
Deadline for submission of proposals March 10
Proposal opening March 11
RFP awarded April 18
Final project presentation TBD
The RFP is available on the Keep America Beautiful web site

If there are any addenda to be added to the RFP, it will appear on the web site above and will be clearly identified as such. The contractor is solely responsible for obtaining all relevant information posted on the website. By responding to this RFP, it will be considered to have obtained all such posted addenda.
The contractor's proposal should be submitted electronically to Shannon Reiter, President, Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful at sreiter@keeppabeautiful.org. Keep America Beautiful Affiliates will not be liable for any of the contractor’s costs associated with submission of a proposal in response to this RFP. Contractors responding to the RFP will provide one electronic copy no later than the date and time specified below.

It is the responsibility of each contractor to examine the RFP and seek clarification if necessary. Written questions will be accepted from contractors regarding this RFP. Written questions will only be accepted via email. These clarification questions are the only means by which a contractor may request clarification of the RFP. No phone calls or conversations with anyone associated with this RFP will be allowed and may result in disqualification from the process.

An electronic copy of all written questions, together with the written responses from Keep America Beautiful Affiliates, will be posted on the Keep America Beautiful web site listed above.

Emailed questions should be addressed to:

Shannon Reiter, President Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful at sreiter@keeppabeautiful.org

If necessary, Keep America Beautiful Affiliates may request a clarification from a contractor for the purpose of comparison to other responding contractors.

The project will be completed, the presentation given and the report prepared at a mutually agreed upon date. However, proposals must remain valid for nine (9) months following the deadline for submission of proposals.

Keep America Beautiful Affiliates reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received and offer a new RFP if it is in the best interest of Keep America Beautiful Affiliates to do so. This RFP does not commit KAB to award a contract or to procure or contract for work.