



CITY OF HASTINGS

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR INDEPENDENT FINANCIAL ADVISORY SERVICES

The City of Hastings is requesting Statements of Proposal for independent financial advisory services for the City and its Housing and Economic Development and Redevelopment Authority. A copy of the RFP is available by emailing Finance Manager Melanie Lammers (MLammers@hastingsmn.gov) or by downloading a PDF copy at the City's website at www.hastingsmn.gov. To be considered, please submit five (5) copies of your Statement of Proposal in accordance with the specifications to;

Melanie Lammers
Finance Manager
City of Hastings
101 4th Street East
Hastings, MN 55033

All Statement of Proposal must be received no later than **4:00 p.m. on Friday June 22nd, 2018**. The City reserves the right to reject any or all proposals submitted.

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I. Introduction and Background

A. Purpose

The City of Hastings Minnesota and its Housing and Economic Development and Redevelopment Authority (HEDRA) herein referred to as "CITY" invite written proposals from qualified firms interested in providing a full range of financial advisory services to assist the CITY in meeting long-term capital financing and economic development needs outlined in this Request for Proposals (RFP) for a five year period beginning Sept 1, 2018. Although the CITY uses financial consulting services to provide expertise in particular areas in support of economic development and finance, financial advisory services for the City Council will generally be minimal and limited to specific bond sales and annual reporting requirements. Services to HEDRA are more extensive as the City of Hastings is active in its redevelopment objectives.

The City Administrator, Director of Administrative Services, Community Development Director, and Finance Manager will be the respective representatives for the CITY and will provide direction, priorities and assignments to the Financial Advisor.

B. General Information

The City of Hastings is a dynamic, historic community located on the Mississippi River 22 miles south east of St. Paul, adjacent to Wisconsin and the confluence with the St. Croix River, a nationally designated wild and scenic river. With a population of 22,640, Hastings has grown into a mid-sized community while retaining its small town feel. As part of the Twin Cities Metropolitan area, Hastings has its own unique identity with an historic downtown, miles of trails, and historically preserved neighborhoods. Hastings keeps a piece of its history while accommodating development and evolving community needs.

The City of Hastings is a Home Rule Charter City. The Hastings Charter addresses election issues, Mayor and Council powers and procedures, taxation and finance procedures, and other miscellaneous provisions relating to official newspapers, acquisition and sale of property, and other general provisions.

The City council consists of a Mayor and six Council Members, two of them at-large and four ward Councilmembers. HEDRA consists of seven commissioners, including two Council Members and five citizen members that are all appointed by the City Council.

The City of Hastings provides a full range of City services including police protection, a full time fire department with emergency medical services, street and park maintenance and construction, protection of environmental resources, recreation opportunities, City planning, economic development, licensing, permits, inspections, and code enforcement. The City operates a water and sanitary sewer utility, a storm sewer utility, an ice arena, an aquatic center, and a hydroelectric dam.

The City developed and adopted CORE values to articulate what our City stands for and what it means to work for our organization as it relates to providing quality services to the public. We are consistently striving to find opportunities to improve our public services and become an even better organization.

- Communication**
- We value and promote participation and interactions with citizens and staff.
 - We will seek to assure timely and open communications while providing background and context for the decisions that are made.

- Optimal Service**
- We recognize the importance of providing timely, courteous and respectful service to the public and to one another.
 - We will seek to serve the public and other employees in a constructive, creative and practical manner.

- Respect for Resources**
- We recognize the value of using all City resources in an efficient and effective manner. We will seek to utilize City resources to serve the common good of all.

- Enthusiasm**
- We are committed to protecting and promoting the unique characteristics of our community, including its history and scenic beauty. We will seek to infuse enthusiasm and enjoyment into our daily interactions with citizens, visitors and other employees.

The City of Hastings is currently responsible for debt service on outstanding long-term debt. Current long term debt includes:

- G.O. Revenue Bonds \$ 2.5 million
- G.O. Improvement Bonds \$ 11.2 million
- G.O. Tax Increment Bonds \$ 2.1 million
- G.O. Capital Improvement Bonds \$ 5.4 million
- G.O. Equipment Certificates \$ 1.6 million

For more information about the City of Hastings, please visit www.hastingsmn.gov

II. Scope of Services

The scope of services requested by the CITY in connection with this RFP cover the entire spectrum of services customarily provided to governmental entities by independent financial advisors. The independent financial advisor is expected to perform service as required by the CITY in a professional and timely manner.

Generally, the independent financial advisor will:

1. Assist the CITY with debt issuance and monitoring.
2. Assist the CITY with financial compliance and financial planning strategies.
3. Assist the CITY with economic development financial analysis, program development and financial reporting.
4. Attend meetings, deliver presentations, and submit products.
5. Advise the CITY on best practices and the development of policies and procedures.

The scope of services may generally be divided into four categories; these are services related to financial planning, debt issuance, economic development , and “special services” on an as needed basis.

A. Financial Planning and Debt Management Services.

Services may include but are not limited to the following:

- a. Reviewing and analyzing the CITY'S long-term financial plans.
- b. Advising the CITY on amendments to policies and procedures.
- c. Reviewing and analyzing alternatives for financing the CITY'S capital requirements (including identifying funding options such as pay-go, cash, grants, use of debt.).
- d. Estimating revenue, financing requirements, and bond payment structures.
- e. Examining related fiscal and credit rating impacts.

B. Debt Issuance Development and Oversight Services.

Services may include but are not limited to the following:

1. Planning and development.
 - a. Analyzing alternatives for financing to strengthen marketability.
 - b. Recommending best method of sale, competitive or negotiated, based on current economic and market conditions and the character of financing.
 - c. Coordinating legal review with the CITY'S bond counsel and other professionals when necessary to ensure legal requirements are met.
 - d. Consulting with rating agencies on the proposed financing and assisting the CITY in obtaining the most favorable rating possible.
2. Marketing.
 - a. Advising the CITY on appropriate terms and conditions and timing of bond sales as well as formats for bidding.
 - b. Preparing the CITY'S official statements and reports and coordinating the updating of current CITY information with CITY staff.

- c. Advising the CITY on disclosure requirements and conformance to timelines.
 - d. Assisting the CITY in publicizing bonds sales.
 - e. Assist the CITY in conducting competitive sales, including analyzing results and recommending award of sale.
 - f. Assisting the CITY in the negotiated bond sales: developing Requests for Proposal for underwriting services, negotiating terms of sale, marketing, preparing marketing analysis, evaluating flow of orders, determining final pricing and terms of sale, recommending final issue structure and assisting in the executing of the bond purchase agreement.
3. Bond closing.
- a. Coordinating bond closing process including all documents and registration.
 - b. Verifying bond pricing and structure.
4. Investment program/Continuing disclosure.
- a. Advising the CITY on investment policies related to bond proceeds.
 - b. Compiling reports that meet continuing disclosure requirements.
 - c. Monitoring for events such as delinquencies or defaults that must be disclosed.
 - d. Completing all required continuing disclosure documents and filing on the MSRB's Electronic Municipal Market Access (EMMA).
5. Providing other financial services as required.

C. Economic Development.

Economic development services to be provided may include, but are not limited to the following examples:

- a. Assisting in economic development and housing project financing.

- b. Identifying private and public financing options, analyzing risks and negotiating reasonable rates of return for private and public participants.
- c. Assisting in implementation and management of new and existing business subsidies including tax increment financing (TIF) districts and tax abatement; developing management controls for monitoring TIF districts and abatement projects, analyzing financial components to determine type of TIF district or abatements and associated financial consideration such as fiscal disparities, local government aid penalties, pay-as-you-go, debt, tax v. tax exempt debt and administrative expensive reimbursement.
- d. Assisting with the identification and development of alternative financial resources.
- e. Reviewing developers' requests for financial assistance and advising the CITY as to the amount and timing of assistance needed and in qualifying the "but for" test.
- f. Assisting in analysis of projects prior to making required payments.
- g. Preparing tax increment analyses.
- h. Assisting the CITY in the preparation and sale of any debt instrument use in conjunction with the financing of development projects.
- i. Assisting the CITY in negotiating development/redevelopment agreements.
- j. Assisting the CITY with land purchases and land sales.
- k. Developing strategies and assisting the CITY implement economic development opportunities and initiatives.
- l. Providing other services as requested.

D. Special Services.

Special services to be provided may include, but are not limited to the following examples:

1. Assisting in the preparation of Request for Proposals for development projects and/or in the evaluation and selection of developers as directed by the CITY.

2. Assisting in the preparation and presentation of fiscal information and credit rating process and consulting with rating agencies when necessary (e.g. proposed financing) in order to assist the CITY in obtaining the most favorable rating possible.
3. Assisting the CITY with preparation of financial reports, as needed.
4. Collaborating with the CITY’S legal counsel to evaluate legal approaches permitting various financing structures and proposing financing methods, with emphasis on innovation, to be considered for accomplishing the CITY’S objectives.
5. Keeping the CITY abreast of legislative and rule changes that affect public financing and economic development.
6. Assisting the CITY identify and develop strategies for special legislation related to public finance or economic development including activities such as planning, lobbying, testing, collaborating with or on behalf of the CITY.
7. Providing other general financial consulting services requested by the CITY, including but not limited to meeting with the City Council to provide education/information.

III. SCHEDULE

During the evaluation process, the CITY shall reserve the right to request additional information or clarifications from a firm, or to allow corrections of errors and/or omissions.

CITY posts Request for Proposal.....	May 25, 2018
Deadline for all firms to submit questions.....	June 8, 2018
City posts responses to all firms’ questions.....	June 11, 2018
Statements of Proposal due date.....	June 22, 2018
Review of RFP’s is completed (Tentative).....	June 29, 2018
All firms noticed of shortlist and interviews scheduled (Tentative).....	July 2, 2018
Oral presentations (Tentative).....	July 9-13, 2018
Evaluation Committee Decision (Tentative).....	July 26, 2018
Contract negotiation completed (Tentative).....	July 30, 2018

Contract consideration by the City Council (Tentative).....August 6, 2018

NOTE: ALL STATEMENT OF PROPOSAL MUST BE RECEIVED BY JUNE 22, 2018 AT HASTINGS CITY HALL NO LATER THAN 4:00 P.M

IV. Statement of Proposal Content and Instructions

A. Preparation of Proposal.

Responses must be in ink or typewritten. Responses must be straightforward and concise to the extent possible. Emphasis should be on completeness and clarity of content and shall not include any promotional material. Failure to meet these requirement or proposals that contain insufficient information for a meaningful evaluation or are not legible may result in disqualification from further consideration.

It is the responsibility of all proposing firms to examine the entire RFP package and seek clarification of any item or requirement. Further, it is the responsibility of all proposing firms to review responses for accuracy.

All firms should submit questions regarding the contents of the RFP on or before TIME? June 8, 2018. The CITY will post any responses to firms’ questions by June 11, 2018 on the City’s website under the finance page. Provide a link?

B. Cover Letter/Title Page.

Title page showing the following:

- 1. Request for Proposal for Independent Financial Advisory Services.
- 2. Firm’s name, address, telephone, and email address of the primary contact person.
- 3. Date of the Proposal.

C. Transmittal Letter.

The Firm must provide a letter of transmittal, signed by an official authorized to bind the Firm, briefly stating the Firm’s understanding of the work to be performed, the Firm’s interest and commitment to perform the requested services and a statement why the Firm believe that it is best qualified to perform the engagement.

The letter should include a brief summary of the Firm’s prior experience performing similar services presented in this RFP. The transmittal letter shall expressly state that the Proposal is valid for ninety (90) days after the proposal due date.

D. Overview.

The Firm should provide a narrative description of the services able to be provided based on the scope of work presented in this RFP. Include any issues that will require special consideration by the CITY. The Firm should also identify any unique approaches or strengths as well as any conflicts of interest. The Evaluation Committee (comprised of City staff) will use the responses in this section to help assess the Firm's understanding of all aspects of the work required as part of this RFP.

E. Technical Proposal.

The purpose of the technical proposal is to demonstrate the qualifications, competence and capacity of the firms seeking to undertake an independent financial advisor role for the CITY in conformity with the requirements of this request. As such, the substance of the proposals will carry more weight than form or manner of presentation. The technical proposal should demonstrate the qualifications of the Firm and of the particular staff to be assigned to this engagement. The Firm should document any assumptions used including assistance needed from CITY staff

1. Firm's profile. (Please limit responses for this section to one page.)
 - A. An overview of the financial advisory services, specifically relating to the government sector, which the Firm is capable of providing, together with an explanation of how these services might best assist the CITY. This description should include:
 - B. A brief description of the Firm's experience in providing financial planning and debt management services.
 - C. A brief description of the Firm's experience in providing capital budget programming services.
 - D. A brief description of the Firm's experience providing debt issue development services.
 - E. A brief description providing investment program management and continuing disclosure services.
2. Narrative. (Please limit responses for this section to no more than four pages).
 - a. Outline of Firm's experience in providing the following services to municipalities that have comparable characteristics to the City of Hastings (more detail can be provided in your response to the questionnaire in Attachment "A"):

- (a) Financial planning and debt management services
 - (b) Debt issue development services
 - (c) Continuing disclosure services
 - (d) Economic and development and housing financing services. Please include any creative solutions or innovative ideas provided by the Firm
 - (e) Tax increment financing (TIF) compliance and document preparation
- b. A description of the Firm's proficiency in dealing with the nationally recognized credit rating agencies for the purpose of establishing and/or improving the credit rating of obligations issued by governmental entities for whom the firm has previously provided financial advisory services. The description should include a brief explanation of how the Firm will assist the CITY in maintaining and/or improving its credit rating.
- c. A brief description of how the new SEC municipal advisor (MA) rule has impacted the Firm and/or changed its relationships with municipalities, how the Firm has applied the new municipal advisor rule to ensure compliance and the process the Firm will take to inform the CITY of and implement future rules or requirements.
2. Any additional relevant information which might be beneficial to the CITY in evaluating the Firm's qualifications to serve as an Independent Financial Advisor including any experiences providing management services, studies, financial analysis, development projects and other case-by-case special projects.
3. Personnel qualifications and resumes. (Please limit responses to this section to one page per professional staff excluding resumes).

For each member of the professional staff proposed to be assigned to the CITY, please provide the following information:

- a. A brief resume of the professional experience and qualifications of the individual.
 - b. An outline of the proposed function of the individual in the proposed engagement.
 - c. A description of the accessibility and availability of the individual.
 - d. The office location to which the individual is assigned.
4. References.
- a. List three to five municipal clients for whom services similar to those described in this RFP have been performed by the professional staff proposed. Include the municipal client's name, and point of contact's name, email address, and telephone number.

- b. List previous or current services provided to the CITY.
- c. List private clients for whom work has been or is being performed within the City of Hastings, the type of project, the specific activities performed, and the name of a person who may be contacted at the private client as well as and his/her contact information.

5. Fee schedule.

The CITY is interested in selecting a firm that provides the CITY with optimal services yet meets the CITY's concerns regarding cost of service. The Proposal should clearly set forth the basis for fees to be charged for the work proposed and for various financing alternatives. The fee schedule should include cost proposals for senior advisor, advisor and paraprofessional.

The Proposal should clearly define the billing process, including the timing of billings as it relates to work performed. As the CITY may also request work to be performed by a firm which does not directly relate to issuance of bonds, fees should not be predominately based on debt issued, but may be stated in terms of any one or more of the following methods:

- a. Fixed fee per financing transaction.
 - b. Percentage of debt issued (not to be exclusively used).
 - c. Fixed annual fee.
 - d. Fixed hourly rates.
 - i. Uniformly applied regardless of competency level or staff performing services; or
 - ii. Stratified according to differing degrees of expertise of the staff performing the services.
2. Other fee structures. The CITY would entertain proposals for creative or non-traditional means for determining compensation, including performance incentives. It is optional for a firm to make this type of compensation proposal. Such a compensation proposal might be most applicable in the services groups: financial planning or special services. There must, nevertheless, be a mutual agreement on the method of quantifying the incentive prior to initiation of work.

7. Incidental expenses.

The Proposal should clearly state whether the proposer or the CITY will bear ultimate responsibility for the payment of incidental (out of pocket) expenses. Should the CITY

be assigned responsibility for incidental expenses, then it will be necessary to set forth in the Proposal the basis for each type of incidental expense, including the following: data processing charges; printing costs; and travel expenses.

F. Proposal Submission.

Four (4) paper copies of the Proposal shall be submitted to:

**Melanie Lammers
Finance Manager
City of Hastings
101 4th Street East
Hastings, MN 55033**

All responses, questions, and correspondence should be directed to Melanie Lammers. In the interest of fairness to all respondents, please do not contact other staff or elected or appointed officials.

**Melanie Lammers
Finance Manager
City of Hastings
101 4th Street East
Hastings, MN 55033
651-480-2347
mlammers@hastingsmn.gov**

Email copies will be accepted if received by the deadline only if they are followed by receipt by the next business day of the original four (4) hard-copies submitted directly to the City as indicated above.

A. EVALUATION AND SELECTION CRITERIA.

The CITY will convene an Evaluation Committee comprised of City staff. The Evaluation Committee will evaluate all proposals submitted to the CITY using both an objective and subjective process. The CITY intends to select and award a contract to the firm evaluated to be best qualified to perform the work with cost, compatibility, and other performance factors such as similar dollar volume and duration of projects, also considered.

A. Evaluation Criteria.

The following criteria will be used in order to ascertain which proposal best meets the needs of the CITY. Evaluation of the Statements of Proposal will be based upon, but not limited to:

1. Responsiveness of the written proposal. (0 to 5 points)

- a. Compliance with format.
- b. On-time Proposal submission
- c. Completeness of Proposal (including responses to the questionnaire – Attachment “A”).
- d. Clear and concise response that demonstrates the Firm’s:
 1. understanding of the services requested;
 2. understanding of the CITY’S financial situation including financial, investment and credit rating strategies; and
 3. knowledge of the CITY’S political, economic and legal challenges (to the extent possible).

2. Capability. (0 to 20 points)

Firm’s response demonstrates a clear understanding of potential work to be performed (services related to financial planning, financial analysis, services related to debt issuance, redevelopment/economic development and special services, etc.).

3. Applicable experience and references. (0 to 20 points)

Firm’s experience and reputation in connection with tax exempt financing, redevelopment opportunities, governmental entities, credit rating agencies, underwriters, creative solutions/innovation and knowledge of federal, state, and local laws relating to governmental finance. Quality of references/cities of similar size with an EDA/HRA/HEDRA component.

4. Qualifications of staff to be assigned. (0 to 25 points)

Education, position in Firm and types and years of experience will be considered, as derived from the written Proposal. Location of the offices performing the work and availability/responsiveness of staff, as derived from the written Proposal.

5. Cost. (0 to 20 points)

6. Overall Proposal Content. (0-10 points)

An Evaluation Form has been prepared to assist the Evaluation Committee. Firms must receive a minimum of 70 points for consideration by the CITY. The CITY may limit the final firm list to the top two to four respondents.

B. Review and Recommendation Process.

The CITY intends to select and award a contract to the firm it believes to be best qualified to perform the services outlined in this RFP. The CITY reserves the right to reject some or all of the proposals and the right to award by individual line item, by group of line items or as a total, whichever is deemed most advantageous to the CITY.

Proposals will be evaluated by the Evaluation Committee who will make a recommendation to the City Council. Proposals will be evaluated and ranked numerically per the evaluation criteria. The recommendation for the successful firm will be based upon the following factors:

- Firm best qualified to perform the work based on cost, compatibility and other performance factors such as capability and experience.
- Firm's ability to meet the CITY'S schedules and regularly, professionally and productively interact with CITY staff.
- Firm's score based on evaluation points.
- Information obtained through reference checks.

C. Oral Presentation.

Firms may be required to make oral presentations at the CITY to supplement the Proposal. Discussion may be conducted with the most qualified respondents for the purpose of clarification to assure full understanding or and conformance to the solicitation requirements. Any oral presentations will be made to the Evaluation Committee.

D. Revisions.

Revisions may be permitted per CITY approval after submissions and prior to award for the expressed purpose of obtaining best and final offers.

VI. CONTRACT EXECUTION

The information below is being provided as part of this RFP to give proposers an understanding of the CITY'S expectations with respect to contract execution.

A. Negotiations and Contract Execution.

Negotiations for costs are generally not used as the competitive RFP process is superior for achieving the best value for the CITY. Revisions may be permitted per CITY approval after

submissions and prior to award for the expressed purpose of obtaining best and final offers. The CITY reserves the right to negotiate the final terms and conditions of the contract to be executed, including award amount.

Should the CITY and a firm be unable to agree upon the entire contract, the CITY reserves the right to discontinue negotiations, select another firm or reject all of the Statements of Proposal.

The contract will require that the firm selected as the City financial advisor shall maintain liability, automobile, worker's compensation, and errors and omissions insurance and shall indemnify the City.

Contracts will be awarded for a period of three (3) years assuming satisfactory service delivery. A possible consecutive 3 year extension will be granted at the end of the three year contract, and upon the agreement of both parties. The successful Firm shall execute a contract with the CITY within ten (10) days after receipt.

B. Contracting Ethics.

1. No elected official or employee of the CITY who exercises any responsibilities in the review, approval, or implementation of the Proposal shall participate in any decision, which affects his or her direct or indirect financial interests.
2. It is a breach of ethical standards for any person to offer, give, or agree to give any CITY employee or Council person, or for any CITY employee or Council person to solicit, demand, accept, or agree to accept from another person or firm, a gratuity or an offer of employment whenever a reasonable prudent person would conclude that such consideration was motivated by an individual, group or corporate desire to obtain special, preferential, or more favorable treatment than is normally accorded the general public.
3. The Firm shall not assign any interest in this contract and shall not transfer any interest in the same without the prior written consent of the CITY.
4. The Firm shall not accept any private client or project which, by nature, places it in ethical in ethical conflict during its representation of the CITY.

VII. REPORTING

The successful Firm will report to the City's Finance Manager, Melanie Lammers, or designee.

VIII. FINANCIAL LIABILITY LIMITATIONS

The CITY shall not be liable for any expenses incurred by the applicant including but not limited to expenses associated with the preparation of the Proposal, attendance at the oral presentations, preparation of a compensation (fees) schedule or final contract negotiations.

IX. OTHER INFORMATION

The City of Hastings reserves the right, where it may serve the CITY'S best interest, to request additional information or clarification from proposers or to allow correction of errors or omissions. At the discretion of the CITY, firms submitting Statements of Proposal may be requested to make oral presentations at the CITY as part of the evaluation process. Following a review of the proposals, a recommendation for award of contract will be made by CITY staff. The CITY reserves the right to retain all proposals submitted and to use any ideas in the proposals regardless of whether that proposal is selected. Submission of a proposal indicates acceptance by the proposing firm of the conditions contained this RFP unless clearly and specifically noted in the proposal submitted. The CITY reserves the right to terminate the selection process at any time and reject any or all offers. The CITY shall not be held liable for any costs incurred by interested providers participating in the selection process.

Appendix A

1. **Debt Issuance and Management Services** (not more than three pages).

Provide the following information about your services related to the issuance and management of debt:

- Briefly describe your services
- Explain why your services best meet the needs of Hastings.
- Provide up to three examples of how your services benefitted a client.

2. **Financial Planning Services** (not more than three pages).

Provide the following information about your services related to financial planning:

- Briefly describe your services
- Explain why your services best meet the needs of Hastings.
- Provide up to three examples of how your services benefitted a client.

3. **Economic Development Services** (not more than three pages).

Provide the following information about your services related to economic development:

- Briefly describe your services
- Explain why your services best meet the needs of Hastings.
- Provide up to three examples of how your services benefitted a client.