

Questions and Answers for Community Planning Entity to Support Community Collaboration for Children's Success

Proposer Information Conference October 16, 2017 & Questions asked from the Public

Updated 11/7/17

Q: How are the communities of focus identified for this project?

A: The Health System worked in partnership with the Human Services Agency and Probation to develop a composite "need" indicator and a composite "readiness for planning" indicator. The need indicator weighs heavily the concentration of youth clients in Behavioral Health/Substance Abuse programming, Probation/Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare, then also incorporates 3rd grade reading level, suspension, low-birth weight and poverty. The readiness criteria incorporate concentration of CBO's, relevant collaborative initiatives, youth servicing facilities and Big Lift communities. Those geographies with the highest need and highest readiness were identified as priorities for community planning.

Q: How was this project conceived?

A: The County became aware that the majority of youth clients in high intensity programs in Probation, Child Welfare and BHRS programming were coming from similar zip codes and wondered if there was a place-based effort that could support the youth and families where they lived so they did not fall into challenges that required Child Welfare, Probation and BHRS programming.

Q: The RFP outlines back to back planning processes in 4 communities. Could the processes take place concurrently?

A: We are open to other proposals depending on a consultant's expertise and capacity. The sequential timeline in the RFP is meant to allow learning from each planning process and incorporate the learning into the next. We understand the timeline is accelerated. The funding for community planning is budgeted for this budget cycle, until June 2019, which means we must complete four plans within that time period. We have a promise of implementation funding in the following two year budget cycle. We don't think a community would have to wait more than a year for implementation funding. We do not want the first community to have to wait too long after their plan is complete to see the start of implementation.

Q: Can you share the scoring system you used to identify the communities.

A: We can share the indicators we looked at (see first question above). We are also in the process of making the overall analysis available to the public and hope to have that available in the next month or so. We can also share that we are proposing to roll out the communities in the following order: North Fair Oaks, South San Francisco, Daly City, East Palo Alto based on need and readiness to engage in community planning

Q: Can the consultant provide input on steering committee members?

A: Because of tight timing the Health Policy and Planning staff, in partnership with other County agencies, will move forward with recruiting for this group, but we are open to adding others depending on expertise on the consultant team.

Q: Is the evaluator RFP on the website for this project?

A: No, the current RFQ on the Get Healthy SMC website is for a separate evaluation effort.

Q: What are the goals for the evaluator?

A: The evaluator will provide the base for identifying learnings from this process and secondarily, assessing whether the community planning was an appropriate intervention to achieve the goals of the project. They will help us determine both how well the project worked overall and also enable us to incorporate real time learnings.

Q: Can the same firm apply for the planning and the evaluation contracts?

A: It would depend on the firewalls within the firm. If you can provide details on how that evaluation would be genuinely objective we can consider it. That would be incorporated into the evaluation RFP, once that is released.

Q: How involved will the planning firm be in the evaluation design?

A: Working with an evaluator will be part of the contract. The evaluator will design the evaluation in partnership with the contractor. The evaluator will develop instruments like pre/post surveys. The planning firm will need to build coordination time with the evaluator into their budget.

Q: Is the timeline for the evaluator similar?

A: Yes, we will release the RFP for the evaluator when the planning RFP closes and look to begin planning and evaluation at the same time.

Q: When will the community planning begin?

A: The workplan will depend on what the consultant can do and what is feasible. A consultant might need to take time to collaborate with an evaluator, community leaders or do data analysis before the actual planning begins or they may feel they have what they need to start immediately.

Q: Will the evaluator do a process evaluation?

A: We're looking for a feedback loop and to make every evaluation event a learning opportunity.

Q: Will there be staff support from HPP for event logistics and other administration?

A: No. Event logistics are the contractor's responsibility and there will be no admin support for this contract. There will be a management analyst position to support the project that will be available for internal questions, coordination across leadership groups and serve as the County lead for the project.

Q: Is the contractor expected to leverage existing relationships or will County staff provide introductions?

A: Both. You will be provided introductions to groups that we have relationships with; relationships contractors bring are valuable too. The leadership groups will bring relationships as well. If you have relationships with key leaders or institutions that are relevant in the communities, please make note of that in your application.

Q: Do we need to back deliverables out to be considered during the next budget cycle discussion—which starts earlier than the June 2019 close of the contract—so we can appeal to the board for the next round of funding?

A: There should be enough to share by the time the next budget cycle discussions begin that we shouldn't have to have all the plans done in advance. There should be enough complete to provide assurance of the implementation funding needed for allocation in the budget. The timeline may be too tight to complete all planning too far in advance of the close of the contract.

Q: What are the technical submission requirements?

A: We will value clear, readable submissions. Please do not exceed 25 pages of 12 point font and 1" margins. You may include up to 5 letters of reference with your application. These will not count toward the 25 page maximum.

Q: Our firm uses fully loaded staff rates. We do not charge separate indirect or overhead. Then we line item direct expenses. Is that ok?

A: Yes. Please share what is included in the fully loaded rates.

Q: What is the approximate number of years the plans should be for?

A: **Revision: We ask contractors to create plans with a 4-5year timeline. This gives time for the first round of implementation funding to be dispersed and implementation to begin and get underway.

Q: The RFP defines the target youth population as 16-24. Could the age vary by community?

A: We include the 16-24 years in our RFP for an outreach strategy that we propose. In our data analysis we have defined juveniles as under 18.

Q: Can we get additional data from you on service utilization?

A: County agencies are very limited in what data we can share about our clients. We may be able to share aggregate data for an area, but don't rely on this as a crux of your application because often agencies cannot share client data.

Q: For mapping and asset maps, do you have inputs at the neighborhood level?

A: We do not have readymade neighborhoods defined at this time. The data indicated odd shaped neighborhoods which may or may not resonate with locals. We will have to do work with the community leadership to better define the geography. We are limited in what we can share about our clients and we expect a large amount of the data will be publicly available.

Q: How much planning time will be needed if the contractor is familiar with the neighborhood?

A: We'll be having conversations at the beginning of the contract with local groups and vetting the project, so some of that groundwork will be done.

Q: Will the community be involved with implementation after the planning process?

A: We don't know what the final priorities will be in the plans and suspect that community members/leaders will self-select as to whether they will prioritize and commit their engagement beyond the planning process. From our perspective, it would be great to engage the community from planning into implementation but we can't predict this. Continued participation will probably depend on the intervention and who comes to the table.

Q: What is most important for the contractor?

A: A Commitment to equity, trauma informed perspective, community process knowledge, with strong technical skills to back it up.

Q: Is there planning fatigue in any of these neighborhoods? How can we build up instead of starting from scratch?

A: We don't know of a process that would make this one feel repetitive. The Big Lift might have some resonance. We can't promise this won't come up but we hope to build upon existing efforts based on the community input at the start of the project.

Q: Contractor might need some upfront planning time and that may be hard to build into a tight timeline between communities. Could you be flexible on that?

A: If you foresee the capacity to begin readiness work in a second community as you are planning in the first, do build that in. We are starting in NFO and we hope that will be an easier start because of the connections there as a County jurisdiction and smaller geography of focus. There is an opportunity to get started sooner in early planning in the second community as you build the planning in the first. But it's important not to engage people too early so their expectations are built appropriately.

Q: What do you imagine key outcomes for success for the evaluator?

A: Community action plans that are feasible with buy in. That the community felt it was a good use of their time and was respectful. At the very tail end of the implementation effort –several years after planning is complete –the intervention overall would prove to be preventative and we would see fewer youth clients in high intensity County programming. But for this planning effort, the evaluator is evaluating the planning process/experience only, not the implementation of the plans.

Q: Is there compensation available for any neighborhood leadership groups?

A: There are no additional dollars. That would need to be planned into the consultant's budget. There are no additional dollars outside of this RFP.

Additional questions submitted by email:

Q: Please clarify the specification provided of "Please do not exceed 25 pages of 12 point font and 1" margins. Is this for single or double spaced lines? Additionally, do the cover letter and budget pages count toward part of that 25 page limit?

A: Single-spaced lines are fine. The cover letter and budget do not count toward the 25 page limit.

Q: Are there significant existing cross agency planning/assessment efforts for which the consultant and planning team should/could leverage in any of the four communities?

A: There are significant collaboratives working in several of the communities, for example the Big Lift and school district mental health collaboratives. We can share more details on collaboratives we're aware of once a contractor has been selected. The selected contractor may need to do additional work to identify all local and relevant collaborations.

Q: Is there any flexibility in reprioritizing or identifying different prevention needs/areas that emerge from the community planning process?

A: We may need more clarity on this question. Identifying community needs and aspirations along with promising approaches will be the focus of the planning process. The communities selected were identified because of their high need and high readiness for community planning based on data available to the County.

Q: For community engagement/stakeholder engagement, will SMC provide a list of approved and/or SMC-based translators/childcare providers that the consultant can then compensate for their work, or will the consultant be responsible for identifying these resources?

A: SMC can refer the consultant to our approved interpreter. We do not have a list of local childcare providers.

Q: To what extent will the Steering Committee play a role in identification of key stakeholders, community based organizations, families etc. to be engaged in the community planning process?

A: The consultant is responsible for working with the steering committee and connections they can help make.

Q: What is the focus of the evaluation: evaluating the community engagement process or the implementation of the strategic plans after the community engagement?

A: The focus of the first evaluation is to evaluate the community engagement process and incorporate learnings into subsequent processes.

Q: Has the County, HPP or other departments engaged in similar community engagement processes before? If so, will the results or outcomes of these processes be made available prior to a consultant being selected?

A: To our knowledge, other departments have not conducted this specific type of community engagement processes with these outcomes in mind.

Q: To what extent will the HPP have a role in/resources to support the logistical elements of the community engagement processes, including recruiting participants, identifying key champions, take all measures to support participation (i.e., food, childcare, translation) in stakeholder meetings, community meetings, surveys, etc.

A: Logistics are the responsibility of the contractor.

Q: Can the consultant sub-contract with a local CBO that may be a part of the Neighborhood Leadership Group to support the community engagement processes, including recruiting participants, identifying key champions, take all measures to support participation in stakeholder meetings, community meetings, surveys, etc.

A: Yes, that could be a productive approach if the contractor is careful to do an inclusive process that holds all community voices at the same level. The consultant could also consider sub-contracting with a countywide entity with roots in the communities to provide equal coverage in all locations.

Q: On p.9: The RFP states that the Family Health Services and First Five can serve as a resource. Please clarify the extent and nature of support that these groups can provide.

A: These groups will sit on the leadership group and countywide steering committee. They can provide guidance and information about their efforts in the target communities.

Q: The RFP mentions data gathering and analysis that the County has already conducted to identify high need and high readiness communities. What is the extent and nature of engagement and buy-in for the planning process in the selected places?

A: Existing data from county agencies was analyzed to identify high need and high readiness communities. Facilitating community engagement and buy in with the project will be a goal of the contractor through the planning process.

Q: Would HPP characterize their role as shaping the overall strategy for development of these plans and the contractor's role as implementing HPP's strategy? Or is HPP looking for a contractor that can shape the overall strategy and process completely? For example, is HPP looking for a contractor that would develop a strategic planning process using already developed tools/frameworks that have been used in similar planning processes?

A: The contractor's previous work and knowledge will be very valuable in carrying out this project. HPP is looking for a contractor with strong community planning experience to bring experience and knowledge to shape the process. That said, the leadership group will have input on the overall direction of the process.

Q: The RFP speaks to identifying gaps of services in each neighborhood, interventions, and recommending service provision changes in each community as well as a best practices and evidence-based strategies to support the needs identified in focus groups. (p.10). Is the San Mateo County Health System interested in including primary prevention strategies to complement the service provision strategies, including ones that might engage sectors such as housing and community development, planning, transportation, and others, that address the community level factors that shape outcomes for children?

A: We are very interested in proposals that include primary prevention strategies and upstream interventions.

Q: The RFP refers both to neighborhoods as well as communities. What is the geographic unit and size of the 4 neighborhoods/communities (e.g., blocks, zip codes, etc.)?

A: Because data were available at varying scales, the communities were identified using a methodology that does not correspond to existing geographies, and the areas vary in size but are all less than 4 square miles. Identifying more organic planning boundaries that resonate with community members may be part of a contractor's scope of work.

Q: The RFP includes developing an implementation plan and logic model for each community. What is the timeframe for implementation? (p.11)

A: We would like the contractor to help develop 4-5 year community plans.

Q: What are the required elements and level of detail of the implementation plan?

A: There are no required elements or level of detail per se. We would like to see plans that clearly prioritize community needs and interventions, are feasible and map out a clear path forward with immediate opportunities and phased future interventions.

Q: The RFP includes developing an asset map of the County as a step and suggest the 41 developmental assets as a resource. Is the County open to an asset mapping process that would emphasize community level resilience factors more so than individual assets? (p.11)

A: Yes.

Q: Is GIS mapping a requirement for the asset maps?

A: GIS seems like a good approach for the required asset maps, but we are open to alternate suggestions.

Q: The RFP states that the consultant will conduct sequential community planning in four prioritized neighborhoods between March 2018 and June 2019. Is it the expectation that each community's planning process will take under 4 months?

A: The consultant may need to do preliminary work in a community as one process is wrapping up, but the planning processes must occur within the timeframe specified.

Q: Are there any page or word limits associated with any of the sections or the overall proposal?

A: There are no word limits associated with sections. Please do not exceed 25 pages of 12 point font, single spaced, with 1" margins. Your letters of reference, budget and cover letter do not count toward the page limit.

Q: Can the County share any of its planned methodology for scoring the proposals submitted (e.g., weighting of the various sections or TABs)?

A: Assessment of proposals will look at planning experience, engagement with the target population, and philosophy both in previous experience and in the proposed plan. It will also consider the approach to partnerships and collaboration, plan for deliverables, plan feasibility, organizational strength and references.

Q: Are there community based organizations in the 4 target communities that have incorporated trauma-informed care into their work, and if so, can the County share the names of those organizations with applicants?

A: It's unknown to us whether or not specific organizations in the communities have used trauma-informed care in their work.

Q: Is there an interest on behalf of San Mateo County to have the consultant team include people knowledgeable about the four target communities?

A: That would be desirable but is not a requirement for this contract.

Q: Can you speak more about the role schools, school district leadership and/or the Department of Education may play in this initiative, either as a location for engaging local communities, a service delivery location, and/or an agent for systems change?

A: We can imagine educational institutions being an important partner in this work. The level of school and school district leadership involvement may vary based on the individual community. The County Office of Education is a partner at the county level on this project.

Q: What kinds of commitment has San Mateo County made to the implement and resource the community action plans? We are interested in the information because it will be important for communities to know and important for consultants to understand in advance, as we consider options for deep and respectful community engagement.

A: The Board of Supervisors has indicated that \$2.5M in funds has been earmarked in the next 2-year budget cycle for implementation. Each 2-year budget is developed and negotiated separately and the Board of Supervisors cannot allocate funds beyond the current 2-year budget cycle. In the budget discussions for the 2017/18-2018/19 budget, the County indicated that \$2.5M of Measure K funds would go to support implementation of the community plans.