City of Rochester and Monroe County

Request for Proposals (RFP)

for the

Emergency Solutions Grants 2024-25 Program (ESG 2024-25)

TIMELINE:

Release Date:	Friday, February 23, 2024
Responses Due:	Monday, March 25, 2024 by Noon
Award Notification:	May/June 2024
Program Term:	City funded programs will start July 1, 2024, and County funded programs will start August 1, 2024. ESG 2024-25 funded programs will have 12 month terms.

BIDDER'S INFORMATION MEETING – REQUIRED for ALL APPLICANTS:

Microsoft Teams Meeting Information below
Date: Friday, March 1, 2024 from 2:00-3:30PM
Location: Meeting – Microsoft Teams Meeting Link
Meeting ID: 280 785 837 70
Passcode: MzWdQi

1. PURPOSE AND INTENT

The City of Rochester ("City") and Monroe County ("County") seek proposals from qualified not-for-profit providers to participate in a comprehensive community service delivery program intended to ameliorate and/or prevent homelessness. Funding is available from the City's and County's respective ESG 2024-25 Annual Allocations. Additional funding may be available due to recapturing unspent ESG awards from prior program years.

ESG funds are intended to be used to meet the goals of alleviating or preventing homelessness, and/or shortening the length of time persons experience homelessness. ESG service objectives must be designed to comply with and carry out the goals and initiatives of the City and County. HUD 24 CFR Part 576 Subpart B provides more details on the eligible activities and populations. Additional information can be found in Sections 4 and 5 of this RFP.

2. FUNDING AVAILABILITY

Funding is available from the City and the County, and applicants must indicate how much funding they intend to use from each source (e.g. 80% City ESG and 20% County ESG). The City and County ESG 2024-25 Annual Allocation will likely be announced in May or June, similar to prior program years, and allocation amounts are expected to decrease up to 10% as compared to prior year funding levels. The combined ESG allocation for 2023-24 was $879,489 including; $160,987 in County funding and $718,502 in City funding. Please note; the City and County may choose to award unspent funding from prior program years.

City ESG funds must be spent on organizations, households, and persons within City limits. County ESG funds must be spent serving households and persons within County limits, but outside of the City of Rochester. All applicants should indicate which funding sources they are seeking, and must demonstrate that they are able to serve the populations those funding sources are targeted to. The City and County may adjust funding amounts and sources at their sole discretion. Prior to making final award decisions, the City and County will work with potential awardees to ensure proposed awards and sources are appropriate.

3. TIMELINE

The timetable for the proposal review and selection process is below, but may vary based on timing of funding announcements and deviations to the review and selection period. The timing for proposals seeking ESG 2024-25 funding is contingent upon the City and County receiving their respective allocations from HUD in a timely manner.

PDF submittals for proposals are preferable, and no hard copies will be accepted at this time. We will also accept materials uploaded to a shared cloud service. The City and County may choose to reject applications and applicants that do not follow the requirements stated within this document. Please send all materials electronically and directly to John Oster at john.oster@cityofrochester.gov and John Lightfoot at JohnFLightfootSr@monroecounty.gov.

RFP and Application Schedule

RFP Release:	Friday, February 23, 2024
Bid Information Session:	Friday, March 1, 2024 from 2:00-3:30 (*Remote - Microsoft Teams link on pg. 1*)
Responses Due:	Monday, March 25, 2024 by Noon
Award Notification:	May/June 2024
Program Start Date:	July 1, 2024 (City funded projects); August 1, 2024 (County)

Any agencies awarded ESG funding will work to develop a contract in a timely manner, including providing the City and County with additional materials and due diligence as needed. Prior to the start of the program year and before entering into a contract, all ESG awardees must attend the Annual Subrecipient Training. In prior years, the City and County held this meeting after the start of the program year. We have moved the meeting up to allow for the sharing of important information as soon as possible. Contracts should be in place before the start of each program's term. With respect to reimbursement, grantees receiving awards greater than $100,000 will voucher monthly, all others will voucher quarterly. Grantees must submit vouchers within 30 days after the end of a voucher period. The City and County will release funds for vouchers only after confirming that HMIS data entry is complete. Grantees must expense ESG 2024-25 funds during the City or County program year; July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025 for City grants, and August 1, 2024 to July 31, 2025 for County grants.

4. PROGRAM INFORMATION AND ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

Those responding to this RFP should be familiar with the ESG program requirements and regulations. The ESG program provides funding to: engage homeless individuals and families living on the street, improve the number and quality of emergency shelters for homeless individuals and families, help operate these shelters, provide essential services to shelter residents, rapidly re-house homeless individuals and families, and prevent families and individuals from becoming homeless. ESG funding may be used for one of the program components listed below, as well as for HMIS related expenses.

The City and County recommend that all applicants review sections 24 CFR 576.102(a)(1)(vi), 576.103, 576.105(b)(4). All applicants should review appropriate HUD reference materials and documentation when designing programs and developing proposals. Section 5 of this RFP (PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS, REGULATION, AND REFERENCE MATERIALS) includes links to several valuable resources created by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). These resources include information on eligible populations and activities, FAQs, best practices, and documentation requirements.

The following is an outline of the services the City and County intend to fund:

STREET OUTREACH COMPONENT (576.101)

Essential Services related to reaching out to unsheltered homeless individuals and families, connecting them with emergency shelter, housing, or critical services, and providing them with urgent, non-facility-based care.

A. Essential Services
    1) Engagement
    2) Case Management
    3) Transportation
    4) Emergency Health and Mental Health Services
    5) Services to Special Needs Populations (specify)

EMERGENCY SHELTER COMPONENT (576.102)

Shelter Operations, including maintenance, rent, security, fuel, equipment, insurance, utilities, furnishings, and supplies necessary for the operation of the emergency shelter. Where no appropriate emergency shelter is available for a homeless family or individual, eligible costs may also include a hotel or motel voucher for that family or individual. Essential Services, including case management, child care, education services, employment assistance and job training, outpatient health services, legal services, life skills training, mental health services, substance abuse treatment services, transportation, and services for special populations.

A. Emergency Shelter (year-round operation)
    1) Rent (organization's cost to rent shelter space)

2) Security
3) Utilities
4) Insurance
5) Other operating expense or overhead items on a case-by-case basis

B. Essential Services
1) Case Management
2) Employment Assistance and Job Training
3) Life Skills Training
4) Transportation
5) Services to Special Needs Populations (specify)

C. Hospitality Nights – calculated as a per-person, per-night cost reimbursement

Note: The City and County will not fund renovation, rehabilitation, or new construction projects.

HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION COMPONENT (576.103)

Housing relocation and stabilization services and short-and/or medium-term rental assistance as necessary to prevent the individual or family from moving to an emergency shelter, a place not meant for human habitation, or another place described in paragraph (1) of HUD's Homeless Definition.

The costs of homelessness prevention are only eligible to the extent that the assistance is necessary to help the program participant regain stability in their current housing or move into other permanent housing and achieve stability in that housing. The list below is not exhaustive, and applicants should review all ESG regulations regarding eligible populations and costs.

A. Diversion Services
B. Housing Relocation and Stabilization Services – Services Cost (e.g. case management, landlord-tenant mediation, tenant legal services, credit repair)
C. Housing Relocation and Stabilization Services - Financial Assistance (e.g. security or utility deposits, rental application fees, moving costs)
D. Rental Assistance (e.g. short-term or medium-term rental assistance, rental arrears assistance)
E. Landlord Outreach

Note: Applicants proposing homelessness prevention activities must be willing to coordinate efforts with existing eviction and homelessness prevention service providers and systems. Applicants should review the Homelessness Prevention eligibility criteria, documentation requirements, and HUD's Homeless Definition and At-Risk of Homelessness Definition prior to submitting an application for Prevention funding.

RAPID RE-HOUSING COMPONENT (576.104)

Housing relocation and stabilization services and/or short-and/or medium-term rental assistance as necessary to help individuals or families living in shelters or in places not meant for human habitation move as quickly as possible into permanent housing and achieve stability in that housing.

A. Diversion Services
B. Housing Relocation and Stabilization Services – Services Cost (e.g. case management, landlord-tenant mediation, tenant legal services, credit repair)
C. Housing Relocation and Stabilization Services - Financial Assistance (e.g. security or utility deposits, rental application fees, moving costs)
D. Rental Assistance (e.g. short-term or medium-term rental assistance, rental arrears assistance)
E. Landlord Outreach

Note: Applicants proposing homelessness prevention and/or rapid re-housing programs should familiarize themselves with the differences between the two program types, including HUD's definitions of Homelessness

and At-Risk of Homelessness (link included in Section 5). These program types offer similar services and assistance to clients, but the populations served vary.

5. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS, REGULATION, AND REFERENCE MATERIALS

For specific guidance on ESG regulations and programs guidelines, please refer to the HEARTH-ESG Interim Rule. Program types, definitions, and regulatory information included in this RFP are defined by HUD, and all applicants must operate any ESG-funded activities in accordance with all HUD regulations. Additionally, grantees will be required to report on all activities through HMIS.

Please pay special attention to eligible populations, program descriptions, and reporting requirements. We encourage all applicants to review HUD's ESG programmatic guidelines and requirements prior to submitting a proposal. Most of this information can be found by visiting the ESG pages at www.HUDExchange.info, and the links below. The ESG program is operated on a reimbursement basis, and failure to adhere to ESG standards may result in a delay, or even loss, of funding.

Information regarding minimum organizational qualifications, eligibility criteria, and program guidelines can be reviewed at the links included in this document, and by referencing the documents and information in the links below. Applicants should send questions to John Oster and John Lightfoot; contact information is included at the end of this document.

HUD regulations and program information

- HUD Emergency Solutions Grants landing page
- Emergency Solution Grants Program Interim Regulations
  (24 CFR 576 at Electronic Code of Federal Regulations)
- HEARTH Homeless Definition Final Rule
- ESG Program Components Quick Reference Guide
- ESG Minimum Habitability Standards for Emergency Shelters and Permanent Housing

6. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS – CHANGE FROM 2023-24

System Participation in HMIS: Recipients of ESG funds are required to participate in HUD's program case data collection system, the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). Grantees must update HMIS data on a monthly basis. **The City and/or County will review the timeliness and accuracy of HMIS data prior to releasing payments to grantees.**

System Participation in Coordinated Entry: Recipients of the ESG funds are required to participate in the Rochester/Monroe County Coordinated Entry system. Additionally, the City and the County reserve the right to request reports and analyses of a programmatic nature.

7. PROPOSAL FORMAT

The proposal should include the following attachments, documents, and information. Applicants must use the templates provided to complete their proposal(s), unless otherwise noted. The other sections of the proposal mostly require respondents to submit third-party documentation/due diligence. Applicants should ensure that they include all necessary attachments and documents with their proposal(s).

1) Proposal Cover Page (Attachment 1)

Program and organizational details. Self-explanatory.

2) Proposal Checklist – Required Documentation and Assurances (Attachment 2)

Please check to ensure that each required item is included with the submission. Ensure that all assurances are initialed, and the form is signed and dated. This page should serve as the first page in your proposal.

3) Organization Qualifications Brief (Attachment 3)

Documented evidence of the consultant's qualification for this project and capacity to perform the work should be described herein, including certifications and/or licenses as appropriate and information about prior contracts similar to that being solicited. Include complete descriptions of any and all collaborative relationships with local organizations that are to be formed for this project. For collaborative proposals, include complete organization documentation for each organization on the team, not only for the lead organization.

4) Project/Program Narrative (Attachment 4)

Provide a detailed description of the proposed service(s), the intended impact of the service on homeless individuals and families and/or those at-risk of homelessness, and a service evaluation strategy. Each narrative must address at a minimum the following program elements:

1. Statement of Priorities and Policies regarding selection of and service to clients, including intended impact of services on homeless individuals and families and those at risk of homelessness;
2. Alignment with the goals and priorities as outlined in this RFP;
3. Profile of persons to be served (single men, women, parent(s) with children, families, and youth) and projected number(s) to benefit from each proposed service;
4. A timeline that incorporates key dates set forth in this RFP and identifies appropriate assignments, tasks, and activities to achieve stated outcomes;
5. A written description of the data collection and evaluation activities in which the consultant will engage to insure project results meet stated objectives.

NOTE: If proposing more than one program (i.e. Emergency Shelter and Homelessness Prevention), each submittal requires separate Attachments 2-7.

5) Service Profile and Staffing Plan (Attachment 5)

For each service proposed, please provide a detailed staffing narrative, identifying the project staff to be hired as direct employees of the lead, and if applicable, any subcontracting agency(s) plus detail on the number of caseworkers, administrative support staff and any other staff positions identified as necessary to carry out the project. Please include a statement of capacity to provide direct client services in languages other than English.

Applicants proposing programs that include subcontractors will be expected to enter into a formal agreement between organizations. The City and/or County may require that these organizations use a City/County produced subcontractor agreement, to ensure compliance with local and ESG regulation. Any subcontract agreements must be fully executed on or before the start date of ESG agreement(s) with City or County.

6) Budget Narrative (Attachment 6)

A budget narrative including consultant staff hours, salaries and billing rates, equipment, rent, tenants security deposits, etc. is required as part of the application. Provide information on staff and overhead costs, and indicate if staff expenses are for existing or new positions. Ensure that all expenses are allowed as per ESG program requirements, and conform to established program guidelines. Any proposal requesting indirect costs above 10% of the total grant amount must include a copy of your Department of Human Services (DHS) indirect cost rate agreement.

Using the provided Budget template, please submit a budget for the project, including an overall project cost, and a breakdown between the costs associated with clients located within the City and those located outside of the City, but within Monroe County. Indicate if any other funding sources have been identified or committed to the project, and provide any details on those funding sources. Please also include information on the timing of expenditures.

NOTE: At this time, the City and County will not fund construction/rehab with ESG funds.

7) Program Budget (Attachment 7)

Use the appropriate budget template to provide an itemized budget, including the source of the required one-to-one (1:1) cash and/or approved in-kind services match.

8) IRS W-9 – Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification (Attachment 8 – no template included in RFP)

Please include this form, which can be obtained online at the following link: https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw9.pdf

9) Certification of Compliance with Rochester Living Wage Form (Attachment 9)

For any organization requesting over $50,000 in grant funding, the City will require compliance with the Living Wage. Attach a Living Wage certificate for the list of titles and pay rate covered by this proposal. The Rochester Living Wage Ordinance (No. 2001-36) was adopted in 2001. The current rates can be found at the following link: http://www.cityofrochester.gov/livingwagerates/

10) City of Rochester Disclosure and Monroe County Debarment Forms (Attachment 10a and 10b)

Please fill out and execute the attached City of Rochester Disclosure Form and the County's debarment form.

11) OMB Circular 2 CFR Part 200 Certification Letter (Attachment 11)

Please fill out and execute the attached letter. This is required to be signed and returned even if you select option 4 or 5.

12) Insurance Certificates (Attachment 12 – no template included in RFP)

Minimum of liability insurance is one million dollars ($1,000,000) per occurrence, and three million dollars ($3,000,000) aggregate, and the City of Rochester and Monroe County must be named as additional insured. Please include insurances and endorsements for the City of Rochester **AND** Monroe County separately (one General Commercial Liability Certificate with the City named as additional insured and one with the County, one Additional Insured Endorsement with the City named and one with County, etc.). See reference documents 2 and 3 for more information. The insurance required includes:

a) General Commercial Liability Insurance Certificate (at least $1,000,000 per occurrence, $3,000,000 aggregate), **AND** the City and County are named as Additional Insured, **AND** attach an Additional Insured Endorsement for each City and County
b) Certificate of NYS Workers' Compensation

c) Employee Disability Coverage (or Affidavit of No Employees)

13) <u>Audited Financial Statements (Attachment 13 – no template included in RFP)</u>

Organizations that have expended more than $750,000 in federal funds in the last year (as indicated on Attachment 11: 2 CFR Part 200) need to provide the most recent audited financial statement (single audit).

14) <u>Interim Financial Statements (Attachment 14 – no template included in RFP)</u>

Submit a copy of the current year balance sheet and income statement.

15) <u>Board of Directors (Attachment 15 – no template included in RFP)</u>

Include a list of the members of the Board of Directors, and any pertinent information regarding board members and this proposal.

16) <u>Statement of Homeless or Formerly Homeless Participation (Attachment 16 – no template included in RFP)</u>

The ESG program requires that at least one homeless or formerly homeless person participate on the board of directors or other policy-making body of the subrecipient. Grantees must keep records to show compliance with the homeless participation requirements. To the extent possible, recipients and subrecipients of ESG funds must also involve homeless individuals and families in day-to-day operations, such as:

- Employment services
- Volunteer services
- Constructing, renovating, rehabilitating, maintaining, and operating the project
- Providing supportive services to program participants

Additional Project Information & Attachments

Applicants are encouraged to submit additional materials to support their proposal.

8. PROPOSAL REVIEW PROCESS

Awards will be determined through a competitive RFP review process. Proposals will be reviewed by a panel convened by the City and County. Written proposals should provide sufficient information to enable the review team to form a recommendation. The City and County reserve the right to reject any and all applications including those determined to contain incomplete and/or incorrect information or otherwise not meeting the requirements as set forth in this RFP, or failing to demonstrate feasibility to carry out the proposed activities in an effective and timely manner.

Further, the City and County reserve the right to request individual applicants to submit additional information needed to make final determinations. The City and County also reserve the right to engage any or all respondents in a telephone conversation and/or to invite any or all respondents to an interview to explore further the possibility of an engagement. Request for additional information does not indicate outcome of the proposal review. Participation in such a telephone conversation or interview upon such an invitation would be voluntary, and does not indicate outcome of the proposal review. Any expenses resulting from such an interview would be the sole responsibility of the consultant.

Upon selection and mutual agreement, the consultant will enter into written agreements with the City and/or the County. Neither the City nor the County discriminates in any aspect of contracting on the basis of age, creed, color, disability, gender or gender identification, marital status, national origin, race, or sexual orientation.

9. EVALUATION CRITERIA

City and County selection of contractors will adhere to HUD ESG policies and regulations relative to achieving the fullest array of services which fall into the service categories shown below. Respondent organizations which have successfully demonstrated, to the satisfaction of the City and County, the greatest capacity to deliver services, and to fully comply with the conditions and requirements set out in this RFP may be selected for contract engagement. Using a point system, the chart below indicates how proposals will be evaluated.

ESG 2024-25 - Program Proposal Evaluation Criteria Elements	Maximum Point Value
1. Responsiveness to the service categories selected by the City and County.	15
2. Anticipated impact of proposed program on advancing or expanding services on reducing the incidence of homelessness.	10
3. Soundness and efficacy of the proposed Program Scope of Services concisely described.	15
4. Demonstrated engagement in strategic and sound collaboration with community partner(s).	10
5. Feasibility of proposed program service delivery implementation plan.	25
6. Consultant's demonstrated capacity for program implementation and management, including human resource functions and projections, as based on relevant experience and reference checks of the consultant, demonstrated mastery of required technology and information system management.	15
7. Consultant's previous service management record of reaching service delivery goals and spending budgeted funds within the program year. This includes timely/accurate vouchering.	10
TOTAL	**100**

10. RIGHTS RESERVED BY THE CITY AND COUNTY

This RFP may be withdrawn by the City and/or County for any reason and that the City and/or County shall have no liability for any costs incurred in preparing the proposal.

All materials submitted with the proposal shall become the property of the City and/or County and will be subject to the New York State Freedom of Information Law (FOIL). All proprietary information submitted with the proposal must be clearly identified and requested to remain confidential.

The selection of organizations is within the City and County's sole discretion. No reasons for rejection or acceptance of proposals are required to be given and decisions may be based on other qualifications and not solely on costs.

11. QUESTIONS AND INQUIRIES

Anyone with questions or comments should contact the City and County using the information at the end of this document. Several links have been included in this document, all of which will provide prospective applicants with general information on ESG funding, programs, and regulations. The HUD Exchange is a valuable resource for learning about ESG, but applicants are encouraged to reach out to John Oster and John Lightfoot, but any of the following persons can be contacted with questions or comments.

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