



# Notification of Request for Proposal

City of Olympia | Capital of Washington State

## Equity Assessment and Strategic Planning Consultation Services

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this request for proposal (RFP) is for the City of Olympia (City) to solicit proposals from qualified respondents to performing a detailed equity assessment of disparities and inequities in the City and the current equity work in development; and to facilitate a process to create an equity strategic plan to support a transformational process incorporating equity analysis into everyday work and assuring city services are equitably available to and accessed by all.

The City of Olympia is now looking to create a comprehensive plan moving forward to be accountable for and address the inequities it was built on and continue to influence how the City operates. This will involve a detailed equity assessment focused on workplace equity, supplier diversity, equitable access of community services, and a general policy review, and will also involve facilitating a process to create a strategic plan to guide future operations.

Response to this RFP does not commit the City to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of the response, demonstrations, or any other activities related to this response. All responses and accompanying documentation become the property of the City and will not be returned. This RFP does not obligate the City to contract for services or products specified herein. The City reserves the right to revise the RFP and/or to issue addenda to the RFP.

The deadline for submission of proposals is **4:00 p.m., Pacific Time (PT), Monday, October 25, 2021.**

### **BACKGROUND**

The City of Olympia was incorporated in January 1859 on the traditional land of the Suquamish after a war with Chief Leschi of the Nisqually. Olympia is approximately 21 square miles in area, has an estimated population of 52,770. With an economic engine anchored by state government, Olympia enjoys the benefits of a stable work force, engaged and educated community, and well-supported school system.

The City of Olympia began intentionally engaging in equity work in 2014 to respond to a low score in the Human Right's Campaign Municipal Equity Index (MEI). That work led to the creation of the Committee on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. The Committee is made up of staff from multiple departments creating events and opportunities to increase cultural awareness. In January 2021, the Committee assisted Human Resources in a city wide workplace culture survey that found that many staff did not have opportunity to engage with or fully understand equity values being acted on at the leadership level.

In June of 2020, after protests around the killing of George Floyd, the Olympia City Council directed the establishment of a new advisory commission to address issues of social justice and equity. This commission will advise City Council, City leadership and staff on policy, planning, and operational recommendations with the goal of eliminating racism and fulfilling human rights for a just and equitable Olympia for all people. The creation of the commission is being led by a community team (Founding Members Work

Group), who will present their final recommendation to formally establish the commission to City Council in November 2021.

In June 2020, the City hired a full time Equity and Inclusion Coordinator, who focuses on external and community elements. This involves establishing connections, seeking out and building partnerships with individuals and groups representative of historically marginalized communities. A second Equity and Inclusion Coordinator was hired in April of 2021, focusing on elements internal to the City. This has involved things like instituting equity hiring practices, addressing workplace environment issues, policy review, equity in services, and organizing employee data.

The City employs over 600 people, of which 9.5% are Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC). In comparison, local census data shows 24% of the population is BIPOC. Women make up 30% of City employees. For both BIPOC and women, representation nearly doubles when looking only at part-time jobs. At this time, the City does not have a count of trans or non-binary employees.

In response to both the national conversation on public safety and local experiences and concerns, the Olympia City Council has heard from the community a call to address inequities and bias in public safety. Subsequently, In July 2021 the City launched a community-led process to reimagine Olympia's public safety system. The engagement process will focus on all elements of the City's criminal justice system including policing, corrections, prosecution, public defense, and courts. In keeping with the City Council's values for highly participatory community engagement, the process is being led by a Community Work Group made up of ten community members who represent a cross-section of Olympia's demographics, expertise, and experiences. They are charged with learning about the City's criminal justice system, listening deeply to community members through an extensive series of conversations and focus groups (with an emphasis on the experiences of marginalized and communities of color), and work collaboratively with each other and City staff to reflect what they've learned in recommendations to the City Council for how to reimagine public safety to eliminate bias and inequities.

Other equity work in the city includes the Olympia Parks, Art, and Recreation Department. They began an ongoing Equity Initiative earlier this year, and has completed equity trainings and an equity planning retreat. Also the Stormwater Program in Public Works has partnered with Lacey, Tumwater, and Thurston County to create GIS equity index mapping across the county. Results of all equity efforts, in progress and completed, will be available for review.

All of the City's equity work so far has been responsive to opportunities or problems that have arisen, without a unifying strategy or plan. There is a need for an equity assessment and strategic plan that can help coordinate equity efforts across the city towards a medium- and long-term vision and goals.

## **OBJECTIVES**

The City's equity and inclusion program has the mandate of responding to inequities and ensuring that City services are equitably accessible to all members of the community. To achieve this, the City is attempting to impact three key areas of equity work:

- Building equity into day to day workplace practices, policies, and procedures.
- Improving workplace culture and building staff capacity to engage in equity analysis.
- Recruitment and hiring equity to support a diverse workforce.

This equity assessment and strategic planning process will support that work by:

- Creating a benchmark for where we are today and identify areas for actionable change
- Identifying key areas of inequity and policies needing to be updated or created
- Addressing the unique needs of all the populations we are working with
- Using a heart centered and trauma informed approach to engagement
- Expanding the goals, vision, and model of change driving equity work for the City
- Supporting a coordinated approach to equity between all city departments
- Providing the tools for staff to re-assess on a regular basis

### **IDEAL CANDIDATE**

The selected consultant(s) will have:

1. Deep understanding of structural and interpersonal impacts of systemic oppression and organizational development responding to those issues.
2. Demonstrated understanding the unique impacts of different forms of oppression and the justice frameworks needed to support specific marginalized communities.
  - Racial Justice
  - Disability Justice
  - Transgender Justice
  - LGBTQ Justice
  - Immigrant Justice
  - Working Class Justice
3. Adeptness at analyzing and summarizing large amounts of information and turning it into actionable insights.
4. Experience working with local governments.
5. Strong familiarity with workplace equity initiatives.
6. Strong facilitation skills and understanding of common barriers to effective conversations on racism, ableism, transphobia, and other systems of oppression.
7. Experience with strategic planning designed for transformational growth

### **INSTRUCTIONS TO SUBMIT PROPOSAL**

The deadline for submission of proposal is **4:00 p.m., Pacific Time (PT), Monday, October 25, 2021.**

To obtain information, please visit either:

1. [City of Olympia RFP & RFQ Page](#). If using this option, please review this page to verify any addendums posted are reviewed before submitting.
2. [Washington State's Electronic Business Solution \(WEBS\)](#). The RFP can be found by in WEBS by searching:

**Organization Name:** Olympia, City of

-OR-

**Customer reference number:** OLY-RFP-007

For questions about this RFP, please contact the RFP Coordinator via email at [thill@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:thill@ci.olympia.wa.us).