



Request for Proposal

RFP # 21-097

Request for Proposals for

Supply Chain & Food Hub Feasibility Study

For Wake County Health & Human Services (WCHHS), Division of Public Health

Wake County, North Carolina

Raleigh, North Carolina 27602

Proposals are due by December 16, 2021 BEFORE 3:00 p.m.

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

Covid19 has shed light on several challenges caused by our current food system model and the overall health of residents as it relates to their diet. Covid19 more heavily impacts residents with chronic illnesses such as heart disease, diabetes, and high blood pressure as well as residents battling obesity. Often, these diseases and health issues are the result of poor diet. Even more, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities have higher instances of diet-related chronic illness, as a result of long-standing systemic food access challenges.

Wake County believes that by improving access to fresh produce, we can improve the overall health and resiliency of Wake County residents. Covid19 not only impacted residents' health, but it also highlighted large failures in the food supply chain. Most obvious is that our current model is unable to handle disruptions at the scale experienced during the height of the pandemic. Though we hope to avoid another emergency of this size, it is vitally important we better support local production and aggregation to ensure access to food during disasters such as the Covid19 Pandemic and to improve residents' overall health and well-being.

Consequently, Wake County Health & Human Services (WCHHS) desires to evaluate the effect of the virus on local food supply chains, food hubs and consolidation. The expected outcome of this process is a blueprint that will allow us to improve and strengthen local supply chains and hubs and to ensure consistent and reliable access to nutritional food for marginalized populations in Wake County.

To address this issue WCHHS is seeking proposals from qualified consulting firms or agencies with a documented track record of successfully researching, evaluating, facilitating, and preparing a comprehensive study and recommendations for Units of General Local Government.

1.2 County Overview

Wake County: Wake County is the second fastest growing county in the nation. The County consists of 12 municipalities and includes Raleigh, the County seat and State capital. The County's population is in excess of one million residents.

1.3 Wake County Health & Human Services

Wake County Health & Human Services is a consolidated agency consisting of Public Health, Social Services, and Transportation services. There are approximately 1,600 employees in 14 locations across Wake County, as well as multiple ongoing contracts and partnerships designed to address the needs of a county growing by 62 people a day. The department was the first consolidated Health & Human Services department in the State of North Carolina.

With the continuing growth of the county and its municipalities the County determined now was an ideal time to evaluate and strengthen the local food supply chain for future growth through a comprehensive, long-term Plan.

2.0 Scope of Services

2.1 Required Qualifications

Wake County seeks a vendor with the following capacity and/or qualifications:

- a. Proven track record of research and evaluation of local food security issues.
- b. The ability to submit monthly invoices for processing and payment.
- c. Knowledge, skill and ability to produce a written report that WCHHS can use to plan for the future
- d. The Provider shall complete and remit the Wake County Business Associates Agreement (BAA) as part of the contract process.

2.2 Services to be Provided

The services to be performed by the Provider shall be as follows:

- a. A formal study evaluating the local food supply chain, including current food aggregation opportunities, in Wake County. The study will culminate in a written report with an implementation plan to be presented at the conclusion of the project. The primary goals are to increase access to, and consumption of local produce, to improve health outcomes, support local agriculture and farm workers, and improve the reliability of our local food supply chain.
- b. Written recommendations on avenues to support BIPOC communities and farmers in gaining equal access to fresh produce and improving farm business sustainability and market opportunities.
- c. An evaluation of WHHS' current EmergencyFood Hub Model to better understand current limitations and opportunities in food rescue, aggregation and distribution within the county as well as unique opportunities that exist through partnerships with the faith community

The study must address the following questions:

(1) What is the **most sustainable farm product aggregation model** that can increase access to fresh produce among all residents of Wake County, especially those battling food insecurity and chronic illness.

(2) What **strategic investments** are needed to best support local food aggregation and distribution will best enhance and expand our local food supply chain while growing equity for BIPOC communities in Wake?

The County acknowledges that many avenues for farm product aggregation already exist in Wake County, and we require the study to take those systems into account in its development. The recommendations must support racial equity through their development and final product.

2.3 Anticipated Timeline

It is anticipated that this study will commence January 1, 2022 and finish June 30, 2022. The Proposer should include a timeline indicating milestone dates to meet deliverables at the five-month mark as well as at the completion of the project and delivery of a final report.

3.0 General Terms and Conditions

3.1 Certification

The Proposer hereby certifies that this Request for Proposal has been carefully examined and the proposer understands the scope of the work to be done and has knowledge and expertise to provide the scope of the work. By signature on the response to the RFP, the Proposer certifies that their proposal is made without prior understanding, agreement, or connection with any corporation, firm or person submitting a proposal for the same materials, supplies, or equipment, and is in all respects fair and without collusion or fraud, so that all proposals for the purchase will result from free, open and competitive proposing among all vendors. Further, the Proposer certifies an understanding that collusive bidding/proposing is a violation of Federal law and can result in fines, prison sentences, and civil damage awards.

3.2 Conflict of Interest

By submission of a response, the Proposer agrees that at the time of submittal: (1) no interest (including financial benefit, commission, finder's fee, or any other remuneration) and shall not acquire any interest, either direct or indirect, that would conflict in any manner or degree with the performance of Proposer's services, or (2) will not benefit from an award resulting in a "Conflict of Interest." A "Conflict of Interest" shall include holding or retaining membership, or employment, on a board, elected office, department, division or bureau, or committee sanctioned by and/or governed by Wake County. Proposers shall identify any interests, and the individuals involved, on separate paper with the response and shall understand that the County, in consultation with legal counsel, may reject their proposal.

3.3 Assignment

No assignment of the Proposer's obligations or the Proposer's right to receive payment hereunder shall be permitted without prior consent of the County. The Proposer may not sell, assign, transfer or convey the contract resulting from this RFP, in whole or in part, without the prior written approval from the County.

3.4 Indemnification

The Contractor will indemnify and hold the County harmless from any and all liability, expense, judgment, suit, or cause of action for personal injury, death, or direct damage to tangible property which may accrue against the County to the extent it is caused by the negligence of Contractor, its subcontractors, or their employees or agents, while performing duties under this Agreement,

provided that the County gives the Contractor prompt, written notice of any such claim or suit. The County shall cooperate with Contractor in its defense or settlement of such claim or suit. This section sets forth -the full extent of the Contractor's general indemnification of the County from liabilities that are in any way related to Contractor's performance under this Agreement.

3.5 Independent Contractor

It is understood that in the performance of any services herein provided, the Proposer shall be, and is, an independent contractor, and is not an agent or employee of the County and shall furnish such services in its own manner and method, except as required by this contract. Further, the Proposer has, and shall retain the right to exercise full control over the employment, direction, compensation, and discharge of all persons employed by the Proposer in the performance of the services hereunder. The Proposer shall be solely responsible for, and shall indemnify, defend, and save the County harmless, from all matters relating to the payment of its employees, including compliance with Social Security, withholding, and all other wages, salaries, benefits, taxes, exactions, and regulations of any nature whatsoever.

3.6 Governing Law

This RFP and any resulting contract shall be governed by and construed according to the laws of the State of North Carolina. Should any portion of any contract be in conflict with the laws of the State of North Carolina, the State laws shall invalidate only that portion. The remaining portion of the contract(s) shall remain in effect.

3.7 E-Verify

To ensure compliance with the E-Verify requirements of the General Statutes of North Carolina, all contractors, including any subcontractors employed by the contractor(s), by submitting a bid, proposal or any other response, or by providing any material, equipment, supplies, services, etc., attest and affirm that they are aware and in full compliance with Article 2 of Chapter 64, (NCGS64-26(a)) relating to the E-Verify requirements.

3.8 Iran Divestment

By signing this agreement; accepting this contract/purchase order; or submitting any bid, proposal, etc., Proposers and contractors certify that as of the date of execution, receipt, or submission they are not listed on the Final Divestment List created by the NC Office of State Treasurer pursuant to [NCGS 147 Article 6E, Iran Divestment Act](#), Iran Divestment Act Certification. Proposers and contractors shall not utilize any subcontractor that is identified on the Final Divestment List.

In addition, any organization defined under NCGS 147-86.80(2), Divestment from Companies Boycotting Israel, shall not engage in business totaling more than \$1,000 with any Agency/business, etc. that boycotts Israel. A list of companies that boycott Israel is maintained by the NC Office of State Treasurer, pursuant to NCGS 147-86.81(a)(1). Any Agency listed as boycotting Israel is not eligible to do business with any State agency or political subdivision of the State.

3.9 Federal Uniform Guidance

If the source of funds for this contract is federal funds, the following federal provisions apply pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 200.326 and 2 C.F.R. Part 200, Appendix II (as applicable):

Equal Employment Opportunity (41 C.F.R. Part 60); Davis-Bacon Act (40 U.S.C. 3141-3148); Copeland "Anti-Kickback" Act (40 U.S.C. 3145); Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act (40 U.S.C. 3701-3708); Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7401-7671q.) and the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251-1387); Debarment and Suspension (Executive Orders 12549 and 12689); Byrd Anti-Lobbying Amendment (31 U.S.C. 1352); Procurement of Recovered Materials (2 C.F.R. § 200.322); and Record Retention Requirements (2 CFR § 200.324)

3.10 Confidential Information/Public Records Law

The County assumes no responsibility for confidentiality of information offered in a proposal. The RFP does not intend to elicit proprietary information. However, if proprietary information is submitted as part of the proposal, the information is to be labeled as such. Proposals are not subject to public inspection until after the contract award. Wake County reserves the right to share any information submitted in response to this RFP or process with any person(s) or firm(s) involved in the review and evaluation process. Proprietary or confidential information must be clearly labeled as such at the time of initial submission and to the extent provided by N.C.G.S. Chapter 132, will not be made available for public inspection. In the event that a request for inspection is made under public records law, the Proposer will be notified of the request and may participate in any subsequent civil action to compel disclosure of confidential information.

3.11 Compliance with Laws and Regulations

Contractor agrees to comply with all federal, state, and local statutes, regulations, and ordinances and rules applying to Contractor's performance hereunder, including applicable laws pertaining to licensing and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, PL 104-91 (HIPAA). In the event any Governmental restrictions are imposed (i.e., corporate integrity agreement) which would necessitate alteration of the material, quality, workmanship or performance of the items offered on this proposal prior to their delivery, it shall be the responsibility of the successful Proposer to notify Wake County at once. Wake County reserves the right to cancel the contract.

3.12 Acceptance

Submission of any proposal indicates a Proposer's acceptance of the conditions contained in this RFP unless clearly and specifically noted otherwise in the proposal. Furthermore, the County is not bound to accept a proposal on the basis of lowest price, and further, the County has the sole discretion and reserves the right to cancel this RFP, and to reject any and all proposals, to waive any and all informalities and/or irregularities, or to re-advertise with either the identical or revised specifications, if it is deemed to be in the County's best interests to do so. The County reserves the right to accept or reject any or all of the items in the proposal, and to award the contract in whole or in part and/or negotiate any or all items with individual Proposers if it is

deemed in the County's best interest. Moreover, the County reserves the right to make no selection if proposals are deemed to be outside the fiscal constraint or not in the best interest of the County.

3.13 New Services

From time to time during the period of work outlined in the RFP and afterward, the County may elect to have the Proposer perform services that are not specifically described in the Scope of Work but are related to the contracted services (the "New Services"), in which event the Proposer shall perform such New Services on a time-and-materials basis, and at an hourly rate that does not exceed the hourly rate negotiated in this contract for each of the Proposer Personnel assigned to perform such New Services. This will be accomplished through an amendment to the contract.

3.14 Evaluation

The contract will be reviewed on an annual basis and shall be subject to approval by Wake County based upon evaluation of the performance of the Contractor in carrying out its responsibilities. Wake County may request a corrective action plan and/or repeat on-site evaluation to address identified deficiencies. Wake County maintains the right to revoke the delegation of any credentialing function by written notice to the Contractor.

3.15 Insurance Requirements

The Proposer must, at a minimum, be able to provide a Certificate of Insurance (COI) meeting the following coverage which will be included in any contract with the County:

The Provider shall obtain and maintain, at its sole expense, all insurance required in the following paragraphs and shall not commence work until such insurance is in effect and certification thereof has been received by Wake County's Finance Office. If any required insurance policy expires during the term of this agreement, Provider must provide a certificate of insurance to the Wake County Finance Office as evidence of policy renewal prior to such policy expiration.

Provider's signature on this agreement indicates that Provider agrees to the terms of this insurance section and understands that failure to comply may result in cancellation of this agreement at Wake County's option.

Workers' Compensation Insurance, with limits for Coverage A: Statutory for State of North Carolina, and Coverage B - Employers Liability: \$500,000 each accident/disease each employee/disease policy limit.

Commercial General Liability - with limits no less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence and \$2,000,000 aggregate, including contractual liability.

Commercial Automobile Liability, with limits no less than \$1,000,000 per accident for bodily injury and property damage for any vehicle used during performance of contract services, including coverage for owned, hired, and non-owned vehicles

Professional Liability Insurance, applicable to any professional services provided under this Contract with limits of no less than \$1,000,000 per claim and \$2,000,000 aggregate.

If any coverage is on a claims-made basis, Provider agrees to maintain a retroactive date prior to or equal to the effective date of this Agreement and to purchase and maintain Supplemental Extended Reporting Period or 'tail coverage' with a minimum reporting period of not less than three (3) years if the policy expires or is cancelled or non-renewed. If coverage is replaced, the new policy must include full prior acts coverage or a retroactive date to cover the effective dates of this Agreement. Provider shall provide a Certificate of Insurance annually to Wake County indicating any claims made coverage and respective retroactive date. The duty to provide extended coverage as set forth herein survives the effective dates of this Agreement.

All insurance companies must be authorized to do business in North Carolina and have an AM Best rating of "A-/VII" or better; or have reasonable equivalent financial strength to the satisfaction of the County's Finance Office. Proof of rating shall be provided to the county upon request.

Insurance with limits no less than those specified above shall be evidenced by a Certificate of Insurance issued by a duly authorized representative of the insurer and dated no more than 30 days prior to the start date of this agreement. In the case of self-insurance, a letter of explanation must be provided to and approved by Wake County Risk Management.

The Provider shall be responsible for providing immediate notice of policy cancellation or non-renewal during the term of this Agreement to the Wake County Finance Office and for three years subsequent for any claims made coverage.

If Provider does not meet the insurance requirements specified above, alternate insurance coverage satisfactory to Wake County may be considered. Any requests for consideration of alternate coverage must be presented by Provider PRIOR TO provision of any services associated with this Agreement.

In the event that Provider uses subcontractors to perform any of the services under this Agreement, then and in that event, Provider shall contractually require such subcontractor(s) to meet all of the requirements of this section.

4.0 General Submittal Requirements

4.1 Proposal Contact

This RFP, and any subsequent action taken as a result thereof, is issued by Wake County Procurement Services on behalf of the County. Proposal responses should be directed specifically, as outlined below. In regard to this RFP and subsequent procurement process, vendors shall make NO CONTACTS, either written or verbal, with any Wake County employee, staff member, or Board of Commissioner members during the period beginning with the issuance of this document through approval of award unless authorized by the proposal contact. Any attempt by a Proposer to contact or influence a member or members of the aforementioned will result in the immediate disqualification of the Proposer from award for items or services on this RFP.

4.2 Proposal Submittal Requirements

Proposers are required to prepare their proposals in accordance with the instructions outlined in this part and elsewhere in this RFP. In lieu of hard copies, proposers should submit an email response to the following email address Bids@wakegov.com and enter RFP #21-097 in the subject line. By virtue of submitting an electronic response, you agree to the following:

- Response to be submitted to: Bids@wakegov.com
- Acceptable file types are: PDF, Word, Excel, and like. Zip files will be rejected.
- All files will be submitted for virus scan. Any files containing such will be rejected with no automatic re-submittal.
- Files submitted are to be directly related to the subject RFP. No promotional type material will be considered.
- Vendors should submit their responses via email to the mailbox listed above.
- File size limits are limited, the default maximum size supported for the entire email would be 35MB.
- Any failure of a file to be received, for any reason, will be totally a vendor / submitter responsibility.

Mailing Address:

Attn: Melissa England
Wake County Procurement Services
Wake County Justice Center, 2nd Floor – Ste 2900
301 S. McDowell Street
Raleigh, NC 27601

The County must receive the emailed proposals no later than 3:00 PM on December 16, 2021. Late Proposals will not be accepted. The County will not be held responsible for the failure of any file to be received prior to the stated Proposal due date and time. The time of receipt shall be determined by the email record. It is solely the Proposer's responsibility to: (1) Ascertain that they have all required and necessary information, documents and addenda, prior to submitting a response; (2) Ensure that the response is received. Late responses will not be accepted, regardless of delivery means, will not be accepted. Failure to respond to all questions and follow the instructions may result in immediate elimination from further consideration.

4.3 Proposal Expenses

The County will not be responsible for any expenses incurred by any Proposer in the development of a response to this Request for Proposal or any other activities associated with this procurement including but not limited to any onsite (or otherwise) interviews and/or presentations, and/or supplemental information provided, submitted, or given to Wake County and/or its representatives. Further, the County shall reserve the right to cancel the work described herein prior to issuance and acceptance of any contractual agreement/purchase order by the recommended Proposer even if the Board of Commissioners has formally accepted a recommendation.

4.4 Interpretations, Discrepancies, and Omissions

Submit written questions about this RFP to Melissa England at melissa.english@wakegov.com by 5:00 pm, December 6, 2021.

Responses to questions will be posted at:

<http://www.wakegov.com/finance/business/rfp/Pages/bids.aspx> by Friday, December 10, 2021.

The issuance of a written addendum is the only official method by which interpretation, clarification or additional information will be given by the County. Only requests answered by formal written responses will be binding. Oral and other interpretations or clarification will be without legal effect. It is the County's intent not to issue any written addenda, clarification, etc.

4.5 Award

Wake County reserves the right to award a contract, based on initial offers received from Proposers, without discussion and without conducting further negotiations. Under such circumstance, the acceptance of a proposal by the County shall be deemed to be an acceptance of an offer and that such acceptance will be binding upon both parties. The County may also, at its sole discretion, have discussions with those Proposers that it deems to fall within a competitive range. The County may enter into negotiations separately with such Proposers. Negotiations with a Proposer may continue with a Proposer that the County has tentatively selected to award a contract to. The County shall not be deemed to have finally selected a Proposer until a contract has been successfully negotiated and signed by both parties.

Wake County expects to enter into a 6-month contract, with a concurrent Business Associate Agreement (BAA).

4.5.1 Alternative Proposals

Wake County reserves the right to award (or not) for all services listed and any portion thereof. The county may consider alternative methods of service delivery consistent with providing high level of customer service while in compliance with all federal, state and local regulations.

4.6 Non-Disclosure of County Information

The Proposer and its agents shall treat all data and information gathered by the Proposer and its agents, including this RFP and all reports, recommendations, specifications, and data as confidential. The Proposer and its agents shall not disclose or communicate the aforesaid matters to a third party or use them in advertising, propaganda, and/or in another job or jobs, unless written consent is obtained from the County.

4.7 Retention of Proposer Material

Any and all information submitted in conjunction with this RFP and the evaluation process will not be returned to the respondent.

4.8 Nomenclature

The use of words proposer, contractor, vendor, provider, etc., all shall mean the firm, company or individual submitting an offer in response to this RFP.

5.0 Proposal Format

5.1 Proposal Format

Proposers shall prepare their proposals in accordance with the instructions outlined in this section. Proposals should be prepared as simply as possible and provide a straightforward, concise description of the Proposer's capabilities to satisfy the requirements of the RFP. Utmost attention should be given to accuracy, completeness, and clarity of content. All parts, pages, figures, and tab should be numbered and clearly labeled. The proposal should be organized into the following major sections:

PROPOSAL

SECTION	TITLE
	Title Page
	Letter of Transmittal
	Table of Contents
1.0	Executive Summary
2.0	Scope of Services
3.0	Company Background
4.0	Client References

Instructions relative to each part of the response to this RFP are defined in the remainder of this section. Response information should be limited to pertinent information only. Marketing and sales type information is not to be included.

5.2 Executive Summary

(Proposal Section 1.0) This section of the response should be limited to a brief narrative summarizing the Proposer's proposal. The executive summary shall, at a minimum, include the identification of the point of contact that shall be responsible for the performance of the services, their credentials and a summary of the proposed services.

Please note that the executive summary should identify the primary engagement contact. Contact information should include a valid e-mail address, fax number, and a telephone number.

5.3 Scope of Services

(Proposal Section 2.0) This section of the response should include a general discussion of the Proposer's overall understanding of the project and the scope of work proposed as outlined in Section 2.0 of this RFP.

As the County is seeking the Contractor to bring substantial expertise in vaccine administration services, the Proposer should outline a recommended integrated approach towards meeting service requirements. This approach should include a detailed plan for staffing and providing quality assurance.

5.4 Company Background

(Proposal Section 3.0) Each proposal must provide the following information about the submitting Proposer's company, so that the County can evaluate the Proposer's stability and ability to support the commitments set forth in response to the RFP. The County, at its option, may require a Proposer to provide additional support or clarify requested information.

5.4.1 Company Background

- How long the company has been in business.
- A brief description of the company size and organizational structure.
- If and how long the company has been providing services to other County Health Departments. If so, provide name and contact information for such clients.
- Any material (including letters of support or endorsement from clients) indicative of the Proposer's capabilities.
- Identify any litigation or governmental or regulatory action pending against your organization that might have a bearing on your ability to provide services to the County.
- Describe your contractual relationships, if any, with other organizations that will provide services described in your proposal.

5.5 Client References

(Proposal Section 4.0) The County considers references to be important in its decision to award a contract. Failure to provide this information will result in the proposal being considered non-responsive.

Please provide a comprehensive client list and indicate the number of persons employed by each. Also provide at least three current clients who we may contact and the effective date of relationship with your company. References should be clients similar in size to the County and from other local public health agencies. Please give their company name and address and the name, title, telephone number, address and effective date of the reference.

Current Reference #1 Current Reference #2 Current Reference #3

COMPANY

Contact Name

Contact Title

Contact Phone

Address

Effective Date

5.6 Cost Proposal

Breakdown of costs and total budget for the Proposal.

Important Deadlines

- **RFP Issued** – November 30, 2021
- **Written questions from vendors must be received no later than** December 6, 2021
- **Responses to inquiries will be posted by December 10, 2021 at:**

<http://www.wakegov.com/finance/business/rfp/Pages/default.aspx>

- **Proposal Deadline-Proposals must be submitted by December 16, 2021 at 3 p.m.**

ATTACHMENT A

Proposer/Firm Name: _____

Address: _____

Name / Title of Proposal Contact: _____

Phone #: _____ Email: _____

Name / Title of Person Authorized to Sign Contract: _____

By signing below, I acknowledge that all information included in the attached Laboratory Services Proposal Package is accurate and that all appropriate forms, attachments, and documents have been provided as requested.

This form to be completed, executed and submitted with response

Chief Executive Officer

Date