



## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

### **Professional Services**

#### **Implementation Plan / Feasibility Study for Historic Preservation Revolving Fund**

July 18, 2019

The Landmark Society of Western New York (LSWNY) seeks to establish a historic properties redevelopment program, which would be funded through a Historic Preservation Revolving Fund.

Toward that end, LSWNY plans to engage the professional services of a consultant and/or consultant team who is/are expert in the disciplines of revolving fund mechanisms, real estate development, and historic preservation. The successful consultant(s) will work closely with the LSWNY to develop an Implementation Plan for the new revolving fund.

LSWNY has received a \$15,000 grant from the 1772 Foundation to complete this study.

LSWNY will accept proposals until **Friday, August 23, 2019 at 4:00 PM (EDT)**. See submission requirements below.

#### **Project Background**

The Landmark Society seeks to launch a historic properties redevelopment program focused on the city of Rochester, where we see a strong need for such intervention. Rochester suffers from extreme, concentrated poverty, which disproportionately affects people of color. The US Census Bureau ranks Rochester 12th in the nation when it comes to poverty and second in the state, behind Syracuse. It is the 5th poorest city in the nation, among the top 75 metropolitan areas. Analysis by the Brookings Institution found that Rochester has the nation's 3rd highest concentration of poor people living in extremely poor neighborhoods (census tracts). This same report found that the number of such Rochester neighborhoods grew from 27 to 37 between reports conducted in 2013 and 2016. 2017 census data showed that Rochester has a 56% childhood poverty rate, making it the third highest in the nation, behind Gary, IN and Flint, MI.

Such concentration of poverty means that there are several city neighborhoods with high rates of vacancy (and the associated social problems that come with vacant properties) and

extremely depressed property values. The cost of rehabilitating these properties is far greater than the resale value. While there are several organizations to redevelop vacant properties, none do so with a historic preservation lens.

With a redevelopment program, LSWNY can fill a void that the private sector is not able to fill. LSWNY can work with neighborhood residents, community groups, neighborhood organizations, the Rochester Land Bank, and the City of Rochester to create the opportunity for quality rehabilitation projects in low-income neighborhoods that will help contribute to an overall improvement in the quality of life and economics of those neighborhoods.

Conducting a feasibility study and approaching the implementation of a formal redevelopment program in a systematic way will provide the organization with the security and knowledge that it needs in order to launch such a program. There is a clear need in the city of Rochester—a need that cannot be addressed by the private market and that cannot be fully addressed by the City or other organizations.

### **Scope of Work**

The implementation plan for a preservation revolving fund will include:

- A. Develop an implementation plan that outlines the pros and cons regarding specific options in the structuring of the fund as well as specific recommendations for LSWNY. Options could include but are not limited to:
  1. Whether to take controlling interest in target properties, strictly disburse funds to third parties, or whether to accomplish fund objectives through a combination of approaches
  2. Whether, if working with third parties, to disburse funds in the form of loans, grants, a combination, or other process
  3. Whether, if taking a controlling interest, to purchase properties outright, accept donated properties, place options on target properties, or accomplish fund objectives through a combination of approaches
  4. Whether, if taking a controlling interest, to mothball/stabilize only, complete exterior repairs, perform complete rehabilitations prior to sale, or a combination of approaches
  5. Strategies to facilitate the redevelopment of important properties by attracting developers to properties that LSWNY will secure (secured through outright purchase, donation, or option).

- B. Develop an implementation plan with criteria that allows LSWNY to analyze and weigh several factors in determining which historic properties should be considered eligible for revolving fund assistance. Factors could include but are not necessarily limited to:
1. Geographic location – For example, should the program focus on a single, limited area for a certain period of time in order to concentrate impact or should the program be more widespread and open to several neighborhoods in the city of Rochester?
  2. Demographic data such as: census tract median income; vacancy rates; zip code; surrounding property values; property sales data.
  3. Property types - Examples of property types could include but are not necessarily limited to: single family homes; multi-unit residences; small scale commercial buildings; industrial buildings; historic houses of worship; properties that are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places; vacant properties. The implementation plan should provide recommendations as to what property types the program should focus on.
  4. Neighborhood context – Should the program focus, for example, on key commercial corridors; residential blocks with high historic integrity; residential blocks with a minimum number of vacant lots; key, anchor buildings in a neighborhood; etc.
- C. Examine other historic preservation organizations’ revolving fund programs to determine best practices and potential models.
- D. Create the functional structure for the revolving fund program, including, but not limited to, features such as:
1. The sequence for initiating its various component parts
  2. A timeline for getting those component parts set-up and functioning
  3. The criteria for eligibility of distressed or endangered properties
  4. The internal guidelines for measuring the likely success of a project
  5. The revolving fund policies and procedures
  6. A revolving fund application
  7. A fee structure, if applicable
  8. The revolving fund approval process
  9. A revolving fund marketing plan
  10. A plan to secure further funding sources for the revolving fund
  11. Develop a process for administering the revolving fund and personnel qualifications needed for implementation.

The deadline for the completion of the scope of work will be determined in conjunction with LSWNY staff, however, completion by November 1, 2019 is preferred. The successful consultant(s) will work closely with LSWNY staff on this project and will provide a report of progress monthly on the first Monday of the month.

The findings and recommendations of the Implementation Plan will guide LSWNY in implementing a revolving fund that will have a beneficial and long-lasting impact on the preservation of historic buildings in city of Rochester neighborhoods.

### **Qualifications**

The consultant(s) must have demonstrated successful experience performing similar professional services within the last five (5) years. Similarly, the proposed personnel must also have experience on similar projects within the last five (5) years. The experience of the individual proposed personnel, not just the firm's experience, will be a consideration by LSWNY in its selection.

At least one member of the consultant team must have demonstrated expertise and experience in each of the following areas: historic preservation; real estate development; revolving funds and finance.

### **Organization Background**

The Landmark Society of Western New York, Inc. is one of the oldest and most active preservation organizations in America, serving nine Western New York counties. Formed in 1937, The Landmark Society continues to protect the unique architectural heritage of our region and promote preservation and planning principles that foster healthy, livable, and sustainable communities. The Landmark Society accomplishes this mission through several programs including: Five to Revive, Preservation Grant Fund, NY Statewide Preservation Conference, and through direct assistance to homeowners, community advocates, municipal leaders, neighborhood organizations, developers, and property owners throughout the region. For additional information about The Landmark Society, visit [www.landmarksociety.org](http://www.landmarksociety.org). The Landmark Society is supported in part by New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.

## **Submittals**

Please submit electronically, as a PDF, the following materials:

1. Statement of interest
2. Summary of qualifications for each member of the project team
3. Review of other similar completed project work
4. At least two (2) references for the above work
5. A summary addressing how the completion of the Scope of Work will happen, resulting in the creation of the requested implementation plan
6. Pricing to complete the implementation plan as presented
7. Proposed timeline for completing the implementation plan. Please indicate if a November 1, 2019 completion date is possible.

Proposals must be submitted electronically to Caitlin Meives, Preservation Planner at LSWNY, [cmeives@landmarksociety.org](mailto:cmeives@landmarksociety.org) by **4:00 PM (EDT) on Friday, August 23, 2019.**