



DELAWARE COUNTY

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Delaware County Housing Study and Needs Assessment

RFP Issue Date: September 15, 2023

Due Date: October 27, 2023

DELAWARE COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND WATERSHED AFFAIRS
Highway Department Building • P.O. Box 367 • Delhi, New York 13753

I. **Project Overview**

The Delaware County Planning Board is issuing a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a Housing Study and Needs Assessment for Delaware County, NY. The study should be a comprehensive assessment of existing housing conditions, including an evaluation of compliance with local and state building codes, demographic and market demands (present and future), and identification of housing gaps and issues. Additionally, the study should examine financing opportunities and conclude with a recommended and feasible plan of action.

The final plan will be incorporated as part of a larger Delaware County Comprehensive Strategic Action Plan as a focused study. The Comprehensive Strategic Action Plan is being developed at the same time; therefore, the successful bidder of this Housing Study RFP will be required to coordinate with the successful bidder of the larger, comprehensive plan to ensure completeness for inclusion in the final Comprehensive and Strategic Action Plan.

The ideal consultant will have technical knowledge of affordable, workforce, and market-rate housing development, the intricacies of such development in Delaware County, and expertise in data gathering, analyzation, and mapping. A copy of the Housing Study and Needs Assessment RFP is available online and can be found electronically at <https://delcony.us/pln>.

II. **General Background**

The Delaware County Department of Planning & Watershed Affairs provides professional decision-making support to the citizens of Delaware County and to other agencies regarding land use, watershed protection, and sustainable community development. For more than 30 years, staff has accomplished this mission by providing technical assistance through programs such as the Town Planning Advisory Service, Environmental Planning, and Geographic Information Systems.

Delaware County is a vibrant, historic, and geographically vast county. It is the fifth largest of New York's 62 counties, encompassing a total area of 1,467 square miles. It is also the fifth most rural. The county constitutes the northeastern boundary of the federally designated Appalachian Region. This designation reflects the rural poverty and relative isolation of the area. Separated from the state of Pennsylvania by the Delaware River, Delaware County is the largest and most western of the four counties in the Catskill Mountains. As of the 2020 United States Census, the county's population was 44,308, with no communities in excess of 6,000 inhabitants. The county includes the New York City Watershed, which is the largest unfiltered drinking water supply in the United States. The watershed region encompasses the central and eastern sections of Delaware County, including roughly 50% of the county's land area, with 17 of its 19 townships having lands within the boundary. Approximately 55% of Delaware County's population lives within the Watershed. Overall, the watershed covers approximately 2,000 miles.

The western rim of the county, which includes most of the Town of Sidney, lies outside the NYC Watershed and is where most of the county's manufacturing businesses are located. Accordingly, healthcare, government, schools, and social services agencies comprise much of

the employment opportunities located in the county. The initial impact of the watershed on Delaware County has been to limit economic development which prevents expansion of the tax base. Because of the environmental ecosystem of the watershed, there have been strict regulations pertaining to agricultural pollution and building construction. Limiting infrastructure growth results in decreased employment opportunities.

Due to the long history of the county and the changes that have occurred, there is a large number of homes that were built prior to 1940. Some of these homes have been restored, which has improved their assessed values over the years; others have been deteriorating since they were built in the early 20th century. There is also a perception that a significant number of single-family homes have been converted to short-term, seasonal rentals over the years. Currently, approximately 24% of the existing, occupied housing stock is long-term rentals with a median monthly rent of \$723. In recent years, new housing investments have been limited to second-home development with price points that are prohibitive to the residents in Delaware County.

III. Scope of Work

The respondent that is selected pursuant to this RFP will produce a report that includes:

A. Housing Needs Analysis

1. Demographics and Economics: Quantify, analyze, and project pertinent demographic characteristics of households and economic attributes of the community.
 - a. Population, socioeconomic, employment, age, educational attainment, etc.
 - b. Data on rent levels and unit sizes/types based on sample data collected from market.
 - c. Housing cost burden by housing tenure and household income (moderate cost burden: 31-50% of gross income; severe cost burden: exceeds 50% of gross income) based on census data.
2. Existing Housing Inventory/Quantify the Existing Housing Stock.
 - a. By tenure:
 - i. owner-occupied, full-time resident;
 - ii. owner-occupied, secondary/vacation/seasonal tenure;
 - iii. market rate;
 - iv. long-term rental;
 - v. affordable rental;
 - vi. subsidized rental;
 - vii. short-term/seasonal rental;
 - viii. off-campus student-by-unit;
 - ix. off-campus student-by-bed;
 - x. on-campus student housing;
 - xi. special needs;
 - xii. vacant.
 - b. By type:

- i. single-family;
 - ii. multi-family (identified by number of units, number of beds, manufactured, townhome, cluster, mobile) based on available data.
 - c. By value: property valuation ranges in geographic concentrations, rental income generated via census data.
 - d. By age, condition and amenities based on sample data from the market.
 - e. Pending housing developments (subdivisions, multi-unit projects).
 - f. Collect data for inventory of subsidized rental housing.
3. Analyze the Property Tax Equalization Ratio across the County
 4. Collect and Analyze Substandard Housing Conditions Data
 5. Affordable/Subsidized Housing Needs
 - a. Analyze the number of households in need of subsidized housing.
 - b. Assess the condition of public housing available, to the extent possible.
 - c. Detail physical condition of subsidized projects, to the extent possible.
 5. Special Needs Housing

Estimate the number of types of special needs housing units required, to include seniors, students, disabled, homeless.
 6. Housing Demand and Construction Need
 - a. Determine the number and types of families in need of assistance.
 - b. Provide estimated construction need for affordable, workforce, and market-rate housing.
 - c. Identify existing housing costs for the area.
 - d. Priority Housing Needs – measure the relative priority based upon the numeric and proportional need of each housing category.
 - e. Conduct and summarize stakeholder interviews, to include government, education, community, and business leaders.

B. Conclusions and Recommendations

1. Identify and summarize gaps, trends, both current and future.
2. Identify any potential barriers to affordable, workforce, and/or market-rate housing.
3. Provide public policy and action item recommendations related to the types of housing options and projects that the local market can support. This should include potential development sites within or near necessary infrastructure.
4. Assess current affordable housing delivery system.
5. Examine federal, state, and local housing programs and regulations.
6. Provide any additional recommendations.

C. Services Anticipated

1. Compile and analyze data, utilizing Delaware County staff resources to provide current plans and access to current GIS data.
2. Schedule review meetings, at a minimum every ninety (90) days, with the Delaware County Planning Board and Planning Department staff to discuss progress and obtain input and guidance.
3. Develop goals, action steps, funding resources, and benchmarks with an implementation schedule.
4. Draft a housing strategy plan and submit for ongoing review and approval by the Delaware County Planning Board.
5. Edit housing strategy plan, prepare final draft, and present to the Delaware County Planning Board and other elected officials, as appropriate.

IV. Funding Requirements

Awarding decisions are based on the availability of funds. Amounts and dates specified herein are not final and subject to change.

A. Availability

A total of \$50,000 in grant funds from New York State Empire State Development are available through this RFP. Applicants may apply for any amount up to \$50,000. Delaware County expects to award one (1) proposal.

Proposed funding is based on the anticipated availability of relevant funds; should anything change, Delaware County reserves the right to adjust based on the funding level.

B. Period of Services

The period of service for a project funded under this RFP will be twelve (12) months, with an anticipated start date of December 2023. No obligation of funds will be allowed before or beyond the grant period of services. Any funds not expended during the grant agreement period shall be returned to New York State.

V. RFP Timeline

A. Schedule

RFP Release Date	September 15, 2023
Last Date to Submit Questions/Requests for Clarification	September 29, 2023
RFP Q &A Issued (via email)	October 13, 2023
RFP Due Date	October 27, 2023

B. Questions/Requests for Clarification

All questions and/or requests for clarification relative to this RFP should be sent by **September 29, 2023** to:

Audrey Benkenstein, Grants Manager
audrey.benkenstein@co.delaware.ny.us

The final Q&A will be posted to the Delaware County Planning Department webpage at <https://delcony.us/pln> by **October 13, 2023**.

C. Proposal Submittal

Proposals shall be received until October 27, 2023 at 4:00p.m. *Please be advised that the timeline for application submission, vendor selection, and process timeline may change due to federal-, state-, and/or county-declared emergencies.* All proposals may be submitted in a sealed envelope(s) or electronically submitted via an emailed link to an online file-sharing tool, such as Dropbox, SharePoint, etc. All submissions shall be properly identified with “RFP Delaware County Housing Study and Needs Assessment 2023 Submittal”.

Proposals may be hand delivered or submitted via an emailed link to:

Planning and Watershed Affairs Department
1 Page Avenue
Delhi NY 13756

Email: shelly.johnson@co.delaware.ny.us

If submitting a hard copy proposal, submit one (1) original and five (5) copies to Shelly Johnson-Bennett at the above address. Please clearly label the response “Sealed Proposal for Housing Study and Needs Assessment”. All proposals must be received on or before **4:00pm on October 27, 2023**. Late proposals will not be accepted.

It is the vendor’s responsibility to ensure the proposal is received prior to the proposal due date and time. Late proposals will not be accepted. The County reserves the right to accept or reject all or any part of any proposal, waive information, and award the contract to best serve the interest of the County. It is the responsibility of the vendor that their proposal is received. Receipt of proposals can be verified by calling 607-832-5444.

No proposals will be accepted from, nor any agreement awarded to any entity that is in arrears upon any debt or in default of any obligation owed to Delaware County. Additionally, no agreement will be awarded to any entity that has failed to satisfactorily perform pursuant to any prior agreement with Delaware County.

VI. Proposal Requirements

Each proposal shall be prepared simply and economically, avoiding the use of elaborate promotional materials beyond what is sufficient to provide a complete, accurate, and reliable presentation. Each proposal shall, at a minimum, include the following:

A. Experience and Qualifications

The proposal should describe the relevant experience, specifically as it pertains to housing development, affordable housing, data collection/analysis, and data mapping. Work on prior research studies and similar projects should be described in detail.

B. Project Team

The proposal shall list all individuals who will work on this project. Resumes for all identified shall be included. The Project Manager should be clearly identified.

C. Cost

Include a budget breakdown of direct and indirect costs associated with the project. Hourly rates per task should be included.

D. Project Approach/Design

Provide a thorough description of the approach to this project. Include the timeframe of specific project components, such as research, data collection, mapping, recommendations, and final report preparation. Include a detail of the anticipated deliverables.

E. Minority- and/or Women-Owned Enterprise (M/WBE)

Delaware County Department of Planning & Watershed Affairs will make every effort to utilize women- and/or minority-owned businesses. A proposing entity should include documentation of M/WBE certification with the proposal, if appropriate.

F. Conflict of Interest

Applicant must disclose any existing or potential conflict of interest relative to the performance of the services resulting from this RFP, including any relationship that might be perceived or represented as a conflict. By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, the applicant affirms that it has not given, nor intends to give at any time hereafter, any economic opportunity, future employment, gift, loan, gratuity, special discount, trip, favor, or service to a public servant or any employee or representative of same, in connection with this procurement. Any attempt to intentionally or unintentionally conceal or obfuscate a conflict of interest will automatically result in the disqualification of the applicant's proposal or immediate termination of an awardee's contract. An award will not be made where an actual conflict of interest exists. Delaware County reserves the right to disqualify any applicant on the grounds of actual or apparent conflict of interest.

VII Award and Contracting Process

A. Evaluation Criteria

The Delaware County Planning Board, or a subcommittee thereof, will review and score the proposal against the following criteria. Note: the criteria are not necessarily listed in order of importance.

1. Experience and Capacity of Applicant

The proposal includes a description of applicant’s previous experience with the housing market in rural, upstate New York, housing market analyses, and research methodologies.

The proposal includes a description of successful past implementation of a similar project(s). It includes a description of the applicant’s organizational capacity to manage and implement the project, along with the identification of key personnel, their bios, and resumes.

The proposal includes three (3) to five (5) references from entities for which applicant has provided similar deliverables.

2. Proposed Budget

The proposed budget is easy to read and provides a clear understanding of how the applicant plans to allocate funding resources. Direct and indirect costs add up to the total award amount. The proposed budget reflects the overall project objectives.

3. Project Narrative

The narrative explains the proposed project in detail by articulating specific project goals, objectives, outputs, and outcomes and clearly and fully describes how the applicant will accomplish the Scope of Work specified in the RFP. Activities, timelines, and milestones are clearly delineated.

4. M/WBE Certification

The proposal includes necessary documentation of applicant’s M/WBE certification (if applicable).

5. Completeness of Proposal

The submitted proposal includes all components described herein.

B. Notification of Award

It is expected that the selection of the successful applicant will be made within five (5) weeks of the closing date for receipt of proposals.

C. Terms and Conditions

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, the applicant agrees to and understands that:

- Any proposal, attachments, additional information, etc., submitted pursuant to this RFP constitute merely a suggestion to negotiate with Delaware County and is not a bid under Section 103 of the New York State General Municipal Law;
- Submission of a proposal, attachments, and additional information shall not entitle the applicant to enter into an agreement with Delaware County for the required services;
- By submitting a proposal, the applicant agrees and understands that Delaware County is not obligated to respond to the proposal nor is it legally bound in any manner by submission of same;
- Any and all counter-proposals, negotiations or any communications received by an applicant, its officers, employees, or agents by the County, its elected officials, officers, employees, or agents shall not be binding against Delaware County, its elected officials, officers, employees, or agents unless and until a formal written agreement for the services sought by this RFP is duly executed by both parties and approved by the Delaware County legislature.

In addition to the foregoing, by submitting a proposal, the applicant also understands and agrees that the Delaware County Planning Board reserves the right to, and may at its sole discretion exercise, the following rights and options with respect to this RFP:

- To reject any or all proposals;
- To issue amendments to this RFP;
- To issue additional solicitations for proposals;
- To waive any irregularities in proposals received after notification to applicants affected;
- To select any proposal as the basis for negotiations of a contract and to negotiate with one or more of the applicants for amendments or other modifications to their proposals;
- To conduct investigations with respect to the qualifications of each applicant;
- To exercise its discretion and apply its judgement with respect to any aspect of this RFP, the evaluation of proposals, and the negotiations and award of any contract;
- To enter into an agreement for only portions (or not to enter into an agreement for any) of the services contemplated by the proposals with one or more of the applicants;
- To select the proposal that best satisfies the interests of Delaware County and not necessarily on the basis of price or other single factor;
- To interview the applicant(s);
- To request to obtain additional information Delaware County deems necessary to determine the ability of the applicant;
- To modify dates;

All proposals prepared in response to this RFP are at the sole expense of the applicant and with the express understanding that there will be no claim whatsoever for reimbursement from Delaware County for the expenses of preparation. Delaware County assumes no

responsibility or liability of any kind for costs incurred in the preparation or submission of any proposal.

Information submitted in proposals, including budgets and cost breakdowns will be considered good and valid for ninety (90) days from closing date for receipt of proposals.

While this is a RFP and not a bid, the Delaware County Planning Board reserves the right to apply the case law under General Municipal Law § 103 regarding bidder responsibility in determining whether an applicant is a responsible vendor for the purpose of this RFP process.

Delaware County is not responsible for any internal or external delivery delays which may cause any proposal to arrive after the stated deadline. To be considered, proposals must arrive at the place and in the manner specified herein.

D. Contract

After selection of the successful applicant, a formal written contract will be prepared by Delaware County and will not be binding until signed by both parties and, if necessary, approved by Delaware County legislature.

E. Indemnification and Insurance

The vendor accepts and agrees that language in substantially the following form will be included in the contract between the vendor and Delaware County:

In addition to, and not in limitation of, the insurance requirements contained herein, the vendor agrees:

- a) That except for the amount, if any, of damage contributed to, caused by, or resulting from the negligence of Delaware County, the vendor shall indemnify and hold harmless the County, its officers, employees, and officials from and against any and all liability, damage, claims, demands, costs, judgments, fees, attorneys' fees or loss arising directly or indirectly out of the acts or omissions hereunder by the vendor or third parties under the direction or control of the vendor; and,
- b) To provide defense for and defend, at its sole expense, any and all claims, demands, or causes of action directly or indirectly arising out of this Agreement and to bear all other costs and expenses related thereto.

Under execution of any contract between the vendor and the County, the vendor will be required to provide proof of the insurance customary for the delivery of technology and services, including commercial general liability, auto liability, and professional liability.