Request for Proposals

Legal Services

Introduction

The Cumberland Housing Group consists of two separate agencies operating multiple programs under one location and will be collectively referred to as such throughout this document. A brief description of each agency follows.

The Housing Authority of the City of Cumberland is a Maryland chartered Public Housing Authority which administers 314 units of Public Housing (PH) and 177 PBRA Multi-Family (MF) Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) units. It is in the process of a full portfolio RAD Conversion of all Public Housing units to PBRA/LIHTC over a multi-year period. It is in the process of a full portfolio RAD Conversion of all units to PBRA with CHAPS issued for one of the six remaining developments with the desire in the future that all will be PBRA.

The Cumberland Housing Alliance, Inc. is a Maryland non-profit 501c3 charted corporation which serves as the development arm of the Housing Authority. This agency has a separate Board of Directors and utilizes the same staff as the Housing Authority. Cumberland Housing Alliance serves as a .01% General Partner (GP) of each of the Public Housing to Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) deals. Cumberland Housing Alliance is the sole member of the GP. The Housing Authority of the City of Cumberland is the sole member of the Alliance. Currently the Alliance is a partner in two Limited Partnership organizations; River Bend Court, LP (2020) and JFK Apartments, LP (2024).

Cumberland Housing Alliance completed construction of a for sale development of 38 homes which was funded in part by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development Neighborhood Conservation Initiative Grant beginning in 2009. The nearly seven-million-dollar project is complete with all homes sold. The homes carry a 15-year affordability compliance period from date of the original grant agreement, which was July 2024. The development has a Homeowners Association, which this agency served as the management agency until September 2024, and when the affordability period ended in 2024, it was turned over to a local accounting firm.

The Housing Authority has maintained the HUD High Performer rating status for the last twenty plus consecutive years. The Housing Authority and Cumberland Housing Alliance has experienced excellent results from previous audits with unqualified auditor opinions rendered on the financial statements

and compliance with Federal laws and regulations, contracts and grants. There has been no identification of audit findings, recommendations, etc. noted in the audits during the past nineteen years.

Request

The Cumberland Housing Group is requesting proposals from qualified legal firms to provide a broad range of services outlined in the Scope of Work below for a 12-month period beginning on April 1, 2027 and ending on March 31, 2028 with an additional two one-year option periods ending on March 31, 2029 and March 31, 2030 respectively.

Scope of Work

Legal services provided to the Cumberland Housing Group would include, but are not limited to:

1. Review and opinion of agency policies and procedures;
2. Review and opinion on construction/service contracts;
3. Review and opinion on Board actions, procedures, and meetings;
4. Perform legal work related to RAD closings within the remaining PH developments;
5. Counsel on agency employment actions;
6. Counsel on EEOC, fair housing and handicap accessibility issues;
7. Counsel on Public Housing, federal, HUD, state and local regulations;
8. Counsel on Maryland Tenant/Landlord Law;
9. Counsel on federal and state "Freedom of Information" and Privacy Laws
10. Counsel on any litigation initiated by or against the Authority; and
11. Attendance at the bi-monthly Cumberland Housing Group Board of Directors meetings held on the third Wednesday of every other month at our central office located at 635 East First Street. The meetings begin at 12:30 p.m. and generally last no longer than 2:30 p.m. or 3:00 p.m.

Proposal Contents

Proposals shall include the following information:

1. Firm's legal name, physical address, and telephone number
2. Number of employees by title
3. History of firm
4. Experience with HUD Housing Programs and/or landlord/tenant relations
5. Name of attorney(ies) who will be providing services and their experience with Public Housing and other HUD Programs and advising Boards of Directors
6. Proposed Fee Structure
7. Certification that the firm is not debarred, suspended, or otherwise prohibited from professional practice by any Federal, State, or local agency and, is currently registered in the State of Maryland.
8. Minimum of three references whose firm has provided similar services.
9. Completion of Attachment #2, #3 and #4 as attached.

Selection Process

Procedures for selection of the successful firm will be qualification - and price-based, whereby the Cumberland Housing evaluates the firms on the factors listed below. The highest ranked firm shall be invited to meet with Cumberland Housing to allow for evaluation and modification of the proposal, if necessary. If Cumberland Housing fails to reach agreement with the highest ranked firm, Cumberland Housing shall follow the same procedure with the next highest ranked firm, and so on, until an agreement is obtained.

Evaluation Factors (100 total maximum points)

1. Experience of the firm related to landlord/tenant relations (30 points)
2. Experience of the firm related to Public Housing Programs (20 points)
3. Experience of the attorney(ies) assigned to provide services (20 points)
4. Firm's cost (30 points)

Cumberland Housing retains the right to reject any or all proposals. Cumberland Housing is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Contact

If you have any questions regarding this Request for Proposal or the services to be performed, please contact Michele Bender, President/Chief Executive Officer at 301-724-6606, ext. 110.

Proposal Submission

Proposals shall be submitted in a sealed envelope, clearly labeled “Proposal for Legal Services”. Proposals are due by **2:00 p.m. on December 10**, **2026** at the Cumberland Housing Office, 635 E. First St., Cumberland, MD 21502.