



City of Aurora, IL

STRATEGIC PLANNING

26-001

RELEASE DATE: February 24, 2026

DEADLINE FOR QUESTIONS: March 13, 2026

RESPONSE DEADLINE: March 31, 2026, 5:00 pm

Please refer to the project timeline in this document for all important deadlines.

RESPONSES MUST BE SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY TO:

<https://procurement.opengov.com/portal/aurorail>

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A - 2025 Strategic Plan Intro

B - 2025 Priorities by Dept and Division

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INSTRUCTIONS TO PROPOSERS

1. SUMMARY

The City of Aurora, IL invites qualified consulting firms to submit proposals to facilitate the development of a multi-year citywide strategic plan. The Strategic Plan will serve as a roadmap to guide the City's priorities, policy decisions, resource allocations, and performance measures for the next five to seven years. The selected consultant will work closely with the city administration, city department heads, and certain other community stakeholders to develop a vision, mission, values, strategic priorities, and measurable goals that reflect the needs and aspirations of our diverse community.

2. TIMELINE

Release Project Date:	February 24, 2026
Pre-Proposal Meeting (Non-Mandatory):	March 10, 2026, 1:30pm Mayor's Office Meeting Room, Third Floor, Aurora City Hall PLEASE NOTE YOUR ATTENDANCE USING THE RSVP OPTION Virtual Option Login Information Microsoft Teams meeting Join: https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/23030860287926?p=qmA1hK209jvymq7w70 Meeting ID: 230 308 602 879 26 Passcode: fX6Wz9YF
Question Submission Deadline:	March 13, 2026, 5:00pm
Response Submission Deadline:	March 31, 2026, 5:00pm

3. ACCEPTANCE OF PROPOSALS

a. Proposers intending to respond to this opportunity must create a FREE account with OpenGov by signing up at <https://procurement.opengov.com/signup>. This step is necessary to establish a communication link with the City. The Proposer, not the City, is responsible for obtaining any addenda to the original specification. Addenda and other relevant information will be posted on the City's E Procurement System. Addenda notifications will be emailed to all persons on record as following this Bid Proposal. Failure of any Proposer to receive any such addenda or interpretation shall not relieve such Proposer from any obligation under their bid proposal as submitted. All addenda so issued shall become part of the contract documents. **Paper submissions will not be accepted.**

b. Proposals may be received up to, but **no later than the designated date and time as specified via the City's E Procurement System, OpenGov.** The City's E Procurement System Clock is the official clock for the

determination of all deadline dates and times. Without exception, responses will not be accepted after the submission deadline regardless of any technical difficulties such as poor internet connections. The City of Aurora strongly recommends completing your responses well ahead of time. All Proposals shall have provided all requested information, and submitted all appropriate forms, certificates, affidavits and addendum acknowledgements in order to be considered responsive.

- **Pricing shall not be mentioned anywhere in the body of the proposal. The pricing component shall be uploaded electronically as a SEPARATE attachment.**

c. The City reserves the right to reject any and all proposals or parts thereof and to waive any technicalities and irregularities in the proposals and to disregard all nonconforming or conditional proposals or counter-proposals and to hold the proposals for ninety (90) days from the opening date set forth above. Proposer agrees to accept a notice of award, if selected, based on the terms of this Proposal in the event that a notification of award is received on or before expiration of the 90-day time period. The City reserves the right to cancel the Proposal at any time, without liability for any loss, damage, cost or expense incurred or suffered by any Proposer as a result of that cancellation. Each Proposer is solely responsible for the risk and cost of preparing and submitting a Proposal.

d. Although price is a major consideration, product quality, references, service, delivery time and past experience, if applicable, will also be considered. No Proposal will be considered unless the Proposer shall furnish evidence satisfactory to the City that he has the necessary facilities, abilities, experience, equipment, and financial and physical resources available to fulfill the conditions of the contract and execute the Work should the contract be awarded to him. Proposal documents which are not responsive to the requirements herein may not be considered by the City for an award of the contract.

The contract will be awarded to the Proposer offering the best value as determined in the City's Proposal evaluation process. In determining the responsibility of any Proposer, the City may take into account other factors in addition to financial responsibility, such as past records of its or other entities transactions with the Proposer, experience, ability to work cooperatively with the City and its staff, adequacy of equipment, ability to complete performance within necessary time limits, and other pertinent considerations such as, but not limited to, reliability, reputation, competency, skill, efficiency, facilities and resources.

The Proposal will be awarded in the City's best interests based on these and other legally allowable considerations. The City and its representatives and agents may make any investigations deemed necessary to determine the ability of the Proposer to perform the Work. The Proposer shall furnish any information and data requested by the City for this purpose.

4. RECEIPT OF PROPOSALS

a. **Proposals must be submitted electronically**, up to, but no later than the designated date and time as specified via the City's E Procurement System, OpenGov. It is the sole responsibility of the Proposer to see that their Proposal is received in the proper time.

b. **Proposals must be submitted electronically via the City's E Procurement System. There will be no exceptions!**

5. WITHDRAWAL OF PROPOSALS

Proposals may be withdrawn prior to the deadline for submitting bid proposals through the City's E Procurement System, the responding Proposer may "un-submit" their proposal in OpenGov.

Proposers are cautioned to verify their bid proposal before submission. Negligence on the part of the Proposer in preparing the bid proposal confers no right for withdrawal or modification of the bid proposal after it has been opened. Proposers may not withdraw their Proposal after the opening without the approval of the Director of Purchasing. Requests to withdraw a Proposal must be in writing and properly signed. No Proposal will be opened or accepted, which is received after the time and date scheduled for the Proposals to be received.

6. QUESTIONS

Proposers shall submit all inquiries, including requests for alternates or substitutions regarding this bid, up to, but **no later than the designated date and time as specified via the City's E Procurement System, OpenGov.** All answers to inquiries will be posted on the City's E Procurement System. Proposers may also click "Follow" on this bid to receive an email notification when answers are posted.

No questions will be accepted or answered verbally.

No questions will be accepted or answered after the cut-off date/time. It is the responsibility of the interested Proposer to ensure they have received addenda, if any issued.

7. INVESTIGATION

It shall be the responsibility of the Proposers to make any and all investigations necessary to become thoroughly informed of what is required and specified in the Proposal. No plea of ignorance by the Proposers of conditions that exist or may hereafter exist as a result of failure or omission on the part of the Proposer to make the necessary examinations and investigations will be accepted as a basis for varying the requirements of the City of the compensation to the Proposer.

Each Proposer submitting a Proposal is responsible for examining the complete Proposal Package and all Addenda, and is also responsible for informing itself of all conditions that might in any way affect the cost or the performance of any Work. Failure to do so will be at the sole risk of the Proposer, and no relief will be given for errors or omissions by the Proposer. If awarded the contract, the Proposer will not be allowed any extra compensation by reason of any matter or thing concerning which such Proposer should have fully informed himself, because of his failure to have so informed himself prior to the Proposal. The submission of a Proposal shall be construed as conclusive evidence that the Proposer has made such examination as is required in this section and that the Proposer is conversant with local facilities and difficulties, the requirements of the Proposal Package documents, and of pertinent, local, state and federal laws and codes, prevailing local labor and material markets, and has made due allowance in its Proposal for all contingencies. Before any award is made of the contract to the Proposer, the Proposer may be required to, upon request of the City, furnish information concerning his performance record in his capacity to complete the Work in an efficient and timely manner.

8. PROPOSAL QUALIFICATION

The City reserves the right to require of the Proposer proof of his/her capability to perform as required by the specifications. However, prequalification of the Proposer shall not be required. The City may, at its option, disqualify a Proposer and reject his Proposal for cause. Reasons deemed to be sufficient for this action shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Evidence of collusion among Proposers.
- Receipt of more than one Proposal on any project from an individual, or from a corporation. This restriction does not apply to subcontractors.
- Default on any previous contract.
- For unreasonable failure to complete a previous contract within the specified time or for being in arrears on an existing contract without reasonable cause for being in arrears.
- Inability to perform as revealed by an investigation of the Proposer's financial statement, experience and/or plant and equipment.
- **Any Proposer who owes the City money may be disqualified at the City's discretion.**

9. EVALUATION PROCESS

Step #1: Initial Screening

Minimum Qualifications and Responsiveness: City will review proposals for initial decisions on responsiveness and responsibility. Those proposals initially determined to be responsive and submitted by responsible proposers will proceed to Step 2.

Step #2: Proposal Evaluation

The Project Evaluation Team, comprised of members of the cooperating City Departments, will evaluate proposals. Proposal responses will be evaluated on, but not limited to, organization, personnel and staffing, company qualifications and experience (including reference checks), project approach, price, and availability and capacity of the company to perform the work.

Step #3: Interviews

The Project Evaluation Team reserves the right to interview top-ranked firms that are considered most competitive. The purpose of the interviews would be to allow for expansion upon the written responses. If interviews are conducted, rankings of firms shall be determined by combining results of interviews and proposal submittals.

Step #4: Selection

The City will select the vendors that are evaluated to be most competitive. When evaluation of the responses produces ratings that are equivalent, the Project Evaluation Team will recommend award of the contract to the vendor(s) whose response is deemed to be in the best interests of the City. The highest ranked firm may be invited to enter into final negotiations with the City of Aurora for the purposes of contract awarding. If an agreement cannot be reached with the highest ranked firm, the City may start negotiations with the next highest ranked firm. Any contract resulting from this RFP will be subject to approval by the Aurora City Council.

10. PROPOSAL AWARD

Except as otherwise may be stated in the Specifications, Proposal award shall be made to the most responsible Proposer meeting the requirements and/or intent of the specifications at the net delivered price(s) shown and

best responding to the needs of the City, in the City's sole discretion. However, if the Proposer modifies limits, restricts or subjects his Proposal to conditions that would change the requirements of the specifications, this would be considered a conditional or qualified Proposal and will not be accepted. The City reserves the right to delete any item listed in the Proposal Package.

11. PRICES

Unit prices shall not include any local, state or federal taxes. In case of mistake in extension of price, unit price shall govern.

12. INTERPRETATION OR CORRECTION OF PROPOSAL DOCUMENTS

Proposers shall promptly notify the City of any ambiguity, inconsistency of error which they may discover upon examination of the Proposal documents. Interpretations, corrections and changes will be made by addendum. Each Proposer shall ascertain prior to submitting a Proposal that all addenda have been received and acknowledged in the Proposal.

13. SIGNATURES

Each Proposal must be signed by the Proposer with his/her usual signature. Proposals by partnerships must be signed with the partnership name by all members of the partnership, or an authorized representative, followed by the signature and title of the person signing. Proposals by corporations must be signed with the name of the corporation, followed by the signature and title of the person authorized to bind it in the matter.

When a corporation submits a Proposal, its agent must present legal evidence that he has lawful authority to sign said Proposal and that the corporation has a legal existence. In the event that any corporation organized and doing business under the laws of any foreign state is the successful Proposer, such corporation must present evidence before any contract is executed that it is authorized to do business in the State of Illinois. Proposals by corporations must be executed in the corporate name by the President or a Vice President (or other corporate officer accompanied by evidence of authority to sign), and the signature must be attested by the Secretary or an Assistant Secretary, along with the corporate seal. The corporate address and state of incorporation must be shown below the signature. Proposals by partnerships must be executed in the partnership name and signed by a partner whose title must appear under the signature, and the official address of the partnership must be shown below the signature. Any corrections to entries made on the Proposal forms shall be initialed by the person signing the Proposal. When requested by the City, satisfactory evidence of the authority of any signature on behalf of the Proposer shall be furnished.

14. ILLINOIS FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

Illinois Freedom of Information Act. The Contractor acknowledges the requirements of the Illinois Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and agrees to comply with all requests made by the City of Aurora for public records (as that term is defined by Section 2(c) of FOIA in the undersigned's possession and to provide the requested public records to the City of Aurora within two (2) business days of the request being made by the City of Aurora. The undersigned agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the City of Aurora from all claims, costs, penalty, losses and injuries (including but not limited to, attorney's fees, other professional fees, court costs and/or arbitration or other dispute resolution costs) arising out of or relating to its failure to provide the public records to the City of Aurora under this agreement.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

1. REQUIREMENTS OF PROPOSER

The successful Proposer may be required to (a) enter into a fully signed contract in writing with the City of Aurora covering matters and things as are set forth in the Proposal Package; and (b) carry insurance acceptable to the City covering public liability, property damage and workers' compensation.

2. CITY'S AGENT

The Purchasing Director, or delegate, shall represent and act for the City in all matters pertaining to the Proposal and contract in conjunction thereto.

3. PAYMENTS

Payment shall be made for services rendered. The City, after inspection and acceptance, and in consideration of the faithful performance by the Proposer, agrees to pay for the completion of the work embraced in this contract, payment shall be made in accordance with the Illinois Local Government Prompt Payment Act (50 ILCS 505/1, et. seq.)

Time, in connection with any discount offered, will be computed from the date of delivery to the City or from the date a correct invoice is received by the City of Aurora Purchasing Division, if the latter date is later than the date of delivery.

Prices will be considered NET, if no payment discount is shown.

All invoices MUST contain a valid City of Aurora issued purchase order.

The successful Proposer shall submit invoices via e-mail to:

PurchasingDL@aurora.il.us

or mail to the following address:

**City of Aurora
Attn: Purchasing Division
44 E. Downer Place
Aurora, IL 60507**

The City of Aurora offers electronic funds transfer (EFT) payment to our vendors. EFT is fast, simple, safe and secure and is ***our preferred method of payment!***

4. TAXES

The City of Aurora is exempt, by law, from paying State and City Retailer's Occupation Tax, State Service Occupation Tax, State Use Tax and Federal Excise Tax (per Illinois Revised Statutes, Chapter 120, Paragraph 44) upon City works and purchases. The City of Aurora's Sales Tax Exemption Number is E9996-0842-07.

5. COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS AND REGULATIONS

The Proposer shall at all times observe and comply with all Federal, State, Municipal and other local laws, ordinances, regulations, and requirements which in any manner affect the conduct of the Work, and with all

Federal, State and local laws and policies of non-discrimination, sexual harassment, and others applicable thereto; and all such orders or decrees as exist at the present and which may be enacted later, of bodies or tribunals having jurisdiction or authority over the Work, and no plea of misunderstanding or ignorance thereof will be considered. He shall indemnify and save harmless the City and all its officers, agents, employees and servants against any requirement, claim or liability arising from or based on the violation of any such law, ordinance, regulation, order or decree, whether by himself or his employees.

6. DEFAULT

Time is of the essence of this Proposal and if delivery of acceptable items or rendering of services is not completed by the time promised, the City reserves the right, without liability, in addition to its other rights and remedies, to terminate the Proposal by notice effective when received by Proposer, as to stated items not yet shipped or services not yet rendered. The City will procure articles or service from other sources and hold the Proposer responsible for any excess cost incurred as provided for in Article 2 of the Uniform Commercial Code.

7. CANCELLATION

The City reserves the right to cancel the whole or any part of the contract if the Proposer fails to perform any of the provisions in the contract or fails to make delivery within the time stated. The Proposer will not be liable to perform if situations arise by reason of strikes, acts of God or public enemy, acts of the City, fires or floods.

8. INSURANCE AND HOLD HARMLESS PROVISION

At the Proposer's expense, the Proposer shall secure and maintain in effect throughout the duration of this contract, insurance of the following kinds and limits to cover all locations of the Proposer's operations. The Proposer shall furnish Certificates of Insurance to the City before starting or within ten (10) days after the execution of the contract, whichever date is reached first. All insurance policies shall be written with insurance companies approved by the City of Aurora and licensed to do business in the State of Illinois and having a rating of not less than A IX, according to the latest edition of the A.M. Best Company; and shall include a provision preventing cancellation of the insurance policy unless thirty (30) days prior written notice is given to the City. This provision shall also be stated on each Certificate of Insurance as: "Should any of the above-described policies be canceled before the expiration date thereof, the issuing company will endeavor to mail 10 days written notice to the certificate holder named to the left".

If requested, the awardee of this Proposal will give the City a copy of the insurance policies. The policies must be delivered to the City within two weeks of the request.

The limits of liability for the insurance required shall provide coverage for not less than the following amount, or greater where required by law:

(1) Worker's Compensation Insurance - Statutory amount.

(2) General Liability Insurance:

- (a) \$1,000,000 per occurrence and \$2,000,000 general aggregate
- (b) \$500,000 per occurrence for Property Damage
- (c) \$1,000,000 per occurrence for Personal Injury

(3) Auto Liability Insurance:

(a) Bodily injury with limits not less than \$1,000,000

(b) Property damage with limits not less than \$500,000

(4) Umbrella excess liability of \$1,000,000 per occurrence, \$2,000,000 aggregate

The Proposer shall include the City as a primary, non-contributory additional named insured on both General and Auto Liability Insurance policies and indicate said status on any Certificates of Insurance provided to the City pursuant to this project. All insurance premiums shall be paid without cost to the City.

The Proposer agrees to indemnify and save harmless the City of Aurora, their agents and employees from and against all loss and expenses (including costs and attorneys' fees) by reason of liability imposed by law or claims made upon the City of Aurora for damages because of bodily injury, including death at any time resulting therefrom sustained by any person or persons or on account of damage to property, including loss of use thereof, arising out of or in consequence of the performance of this project work, whether such claims or injuries to persons or damage to property be due to the negligence of the Proposer or his Subcontractors. The Proposer shall assume total risk and shall be responsible for any and all damages or losses caused by or in any way resulting from the work and provide all insurance necessary to protect and save harmless the City of Aurora and its employees.

9. SUBLETTING OR ASSIGNMENT OF WORK

If the Proposer sublets the whole or any part of the Work to be done under the contract, with or without the written consent of the City, he shall not, under any circumstances, be relieved of his liabilities and obligations.

A Payment Bond will be required if the Proposer sublets any of the requested services. All transactions of the City shall be with the Proposer; subcontractors shall be recognized only in the capacity of employees or workmen and shall be subject to the same requirements as to character and competence. In case any party or parties, to whom any work under the contract shall have been sublet, shall disregard the directions of the City or his duly authorized representatives, or shall furnish any unsatisfactory Work or shall fail or refuse in any way to conform to any of the provisions or conditions of the contract, then in that case, upon the written order of the City, the Proposer shall require said party or parties in default to discontinue Work under the contract. Said Work shall be corrected or made good and shall be continued and completed by the said Proposer or by such other party or parties as are approved by the City, in the manner and subject to all of the requirements specified in the contract.

10. WORKERS COMPENSATION ACT

The Proposer further agrees to insure his employees and their beneficiaries and to the employees and the beneficiaries of any subcontractor employed from time to time by him on said Work, the necessary first-aid, medical, surgical, and hospital services and any compensation provided for in the Workers Compensation Act of the State of Illinois that is or may be in force in the State.

Such insurance shall be placed by said Proposer in a company or association (to be approved by the City and to be accepted by the Council thereof) authorized under the laws of the State of Illinois to insure the liability above specified.

Said Proposer hereby further agrees to indemnify, keep and save harmless said City from all action, proceedings, claims, judgments, awards, and costs, loss, damages, expenses, and attorney's fees which may in any way come against said City by reason of any accidental injuries or death suffered by any of his employees or the employees of any subcontractor employed by him in and about the performance of the Work provided for in the Proposal, and any and all liability resulting thereupon; and said Proposer, in case of any suit, action, or proceeding on account of any or all of the foregoing shall defend the same for and on behalf of said City and indemnify the City therefore, and pay the amount of any and all awards and final judgments and orders rendered and entered therein, together with all loss, costs, damages, attorney's fees, and expenses incurred therein. Said Proposer shall be the sole employer of its employees and workers, and in no way so shall the City be considered a joint employer of same under any circumstance.

11. MINORITY PARTICIPATION

The City of Aurora encourages minority business firms to submit Proposals and encourages the successful Proposer to utilize minority businesses as sub-contractors for supplies, equipment, services and construction.

12. PROSECUTION OF WORK

The Proposer shall begin the Work to be performed under the Proposal as specified in the specifications after the execution and acceptance of the Proposal, unless otherwise provided. The Work shall be conducted in such a manner and with sufficient materials, equipment and labor as is considered necessary to ensure its completion within the time specified in the Proposal.

13. TIME

Proposer shall schedule its Work to meet the requirement of the City. Proposer shall perform the Work expeditiously in cooperation with the City's agent, employees, contractors and subcontractors. Proposer shall make no claim against the City and no claim shall be allowed for any damages which may arise out of any delay caused by City, its agents, employees, contractor or subcontractors. Proposer's sole remedy for delay shall be an extension in the contract time.

14. ILLINOIS NON-APPROPRIATION CLAUSE

A forfeit clause is provided pursuant to the Illinois Non-Appropriation Clause of funds for government entities that if funds or budgets are not approved, service may be cancelled. No early cancellation penalties will be assessed, but the customer must be given 30-day notice of intent to cancel.

15. TERMINATION FOR CAUSE

This Proposal may be terminated by the City at any time upon thirty (30) days written notice, or by either party in the event of substantial failure to perform in accordance with the terms hereof by the other party through no fault of the terminating party. This Proposal is also subject to termination by either party if either party is restrained by state or federal law of a court of competent jurisdiction from performing the provisions of this Agreement.

Upon such termination, the liabilities of the parties to this RFP shall cease, but they shall not be relieved of the duty to perform their obligations up to the date of termination. Mailing of such notice, as and when above provided, shall be equivalent to personal notice and shall be deemed to have been given at the time of mailing.

If this RFP is terminated due to the City's substantial failure to perform, the Proposer shall be paid for labor and expenses incurred to date, subject to offset of any damages, losses or claims against the City resulting from or relating to Proposer's performance or failure to perform under this agreement.

In the event of termination by the City upon notice and without cause, upon completion of any phase of the Basic Services, fees due the Proposer for services rendered through such phase shall constitute total payment for services. In the event of such termination by the City during any phase of the Basic Services, the Proposer will be paid for services rendered during the phase on the basis of the proportion of work completed on the phase as of the date of termination to the total work required for that phase.

SCOPE OF WORK

1. PROJECT INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

Proposers are required to read and understand all information contained within the entire proposal package. By responding to this RFP, the proposer agrees to have read and understands these documents.

The City of Aurora, IL invites qualified consulting firms to submit proposals to facilitate the development of a multi-year citywide strategic plan. The Strategic Plan will serve as a roadmap to guide the City's priorities, policy decisions, resource allocations, and performance measures for the next five to seven years. The selected consultant will work closely with the city administration, city department heads, and certain other community stakeholders to develop a vision, mission, values, strategic priorities, and measurable goals that reflect the needs and aspirations of our diverse community.

The City of Aurora is located approximately 36 miles west of Chicago, Illinois, on the Fox River. The city extends into Kane, DuPage, Kendall, and Will Counties and spans 46 square miles. The city provides a full range of municipal services, to include public safety, roadway maintenance, refuse disposal, public improvements, planning and zoning, engineering and inspection, water and sewer utility service, youth and certain other social services, and general administrative services. Several municipal parks, a zoo, and a golf course are among its many amenities. The city government consists of 1,207.50 full-time equivalent employees.

The equalized value of property in Aurora was \$5.9 billion as of 2024. Major tax generators in the city include the Fox Valley Mall, the Chicago Premium Outlet Mall, and Hollywood Casino.

The city's 2026 expenditure budget is \$688 million. The general fund expenditure budget is \$254 million. To balance the 2026 general fund budget, the city's administration had to reduce expenditures by approximately \$30 million. This required staff reductions.

The city's Capital Improvement Plan has captured a program of projects that span from 2026 through 2035 and amounts to \$810 million. The plan includes the project classifications of downtown, economic development, facilities, municipal airport, neighborhood redevelopment, recreation, stormwater, transportation, and water and sewer.

The major issues confronting the city include, but are not limited to, continued downtown redevelopment, maintaining expansive infrastructure networks, and funding substantial post-employment benefit liabilities.

John Laesch was elected as the 60th Mayor of the City of Aurora in April 2025. In his first term, Mayor Laesch seeks to build a community that embraces social justice, environmental sustainability, and inclusiveness. Through this request for proposals, Mayor Laesch's administration is seeking a skilled and experienced consultant to assist in establishing a new strategic plan for the city and update its priorities in light of current resident and business needs.

To provide additional background information, the city's 2025 strategic plan (including departmental priorities) is attached to this request for proposals. Also, we have attached a Civic Engagement Report. This report reflects input that city officials have received from community stakeholders through recently convened listening and action tours as well as public transition committee meetings. To provide a further appreciation of the Aurora community, a Nonprofit Market Analysis is included.

2. TENTATIVE PROJECT TIMELINE

Subject to Change

Release RFP: Tuesday, February 24, 2026

Pre-Proposal Meeting (Non-Mandatory): 1:30 pm (CST), Tuesday, March 10, 2026

Questions Due: 5:00 pm, Friday, March 13, 2026

Addendum Posted: 5:00 pm, Wednesday, March 18, 2026

RFP Due Date: 5:00 pm, Tuesday, March 31, 2026

Finalist Interviews: week of April 13, 2026

Finance Committee: Thursday, May 14, 2026

Committee of the Whole: Tuesday, June 2, 2026

City Council: Tuesday, June 9, 2026

3. MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

The following are minimum requirements that the Proposer must meet in order to be eligible to submit a proposal. Responses must clearly show compliance with these minimum qualifications. The City will reject without further consideration those applications that are not clearly responsive to these minimum qualifications. Each specification included in this package describes the services which the City feels is necessary to meet the performance requirements of the City, and shall be considered the minimum standards expected of the Contractor. The specifications are not intended to exclude potential Contractors.

Minimum Qualifications: Consultant firms and their lead project consultant must have at least five (5) years of experience in consulting related to organizational strategic planning. Municipal strategic planning consulting experience is preferred.

4. SCOPE OF SERVICES

1. Project Launch and Planning

- A. Conduct a project kickoff with the city senior leadership to establish roles, responsibilities, timeline, communication expectations, and desired outcomes. (The city's senior leadership consists of about 20 individuals and includes the Mayor's Office executives and department heads.)
- B. Develop a detailed project plan outlining key phases, milestones, and deliverables.

2. Discovery

- A. Review and analyze relevant internal documents and data, including demographic data, service and program data, budget, and city staff structure.
- B. Conduct an environmental scan, including peer municipal benchmarking, to identify best practices relevant to the City of Aurora.

- C. Consider community business and resident input obtained through town hall meetings and city senior leadership interactions with staff. The City does not expect the consultant to conduct additional community-wide engagement beyond reviewing existing engagement reports.

3. Internal Engagement and Alignment

- A. Engage with the city leadership to evaluate current operations, culture, organizational structure, and service delivery.
- B. Review current departmental and divisional goals for possible retention under a new strategic direction.
- C. Initial 90 minute meeting with the Aurora Mayor to gain an understanding of his aspirations for the city.
- D. Develop and conduct a survey of the city's 12 alderpersons to gain an understanding of their preferences for the direction of the city.

4. Mission, Vision, and Values Development

- A. Lead a collaborative and iterative process to develop revised mission, vision, and value statements that will be applicable until at least May 1, ~~2029~~ 2031, and reflect city senior leadership and community input.

5. Strategic Priorities and Goals Development

- A. Facilitate the development of strategic priorities and goals with the city senior leadership that are informed by assessment findings and aligned with the city's vision and values.
- B. Facilitate feedback and revision sessions with the city senior leadership to ensure clarity, alignment, and shared ownership.
- C. Items 4a, 5a, and 5b are expected to require in-person sessions spanning 8 to 16 hours in total.

6. Implementation and Evaluation

- A. Facilitate the development of departmental and divisional goals in support of the city's strategic priorities and goals.
- B. Create an actionable implementation plan specifying responsible parties and performance management structures to ensure compliance, timelines, and resource considerations (i.e., integration with the budget and, as appropriate, the capital improvement plan).
- C. Establish measurable outcomes, key performance indicators (KPIs), and tools for tracking progress and evaluating impact (e.g., a dashboard template to report annual and interim results). In particular, the administration is interested in measuring outcomes related to equity and environmental sustainability.

- D. Items 6a, 6b, and 6c are expected to require an in-person session of 8 hours. The city leadership can be required to do preparatory work before or follow-up work after the in-person session. (The city's department heads and division heads total about 85 individuals.)

7. Final Deliverables and Communication Tools

- A. Prepare and submit a final strategic plan, executive summary, slide presentation, and communication materials (e.g., talking points, handouts) for broad dissemination and stakeholder engagement.
- B. Ensure that the materials are accessible and user-friendly for internal and external audiences.

8. Plan Presentation

- A. Support the city's Chief of Staff and Chief Operating Officer in presenting the final strategic plan to key audiences, including the Aurora City Council, city staff, and community stakeholders.

9. Project Close and Recommendations

- A. Conduct a final debrief with the city senior leadership to review deliverables and answer questions.
- B. Provide guidance on implementing, evaluating, and updating the plan to ensure long-term success and adaptability.

SUBMITTAL CONTENT

1. TECHNICAL PROPOSAL

Submitted proposals shall be organized in the following order which allows for clarity and ease of review of the proposals. Where indicated, City forms must be completed and submitted. Proposals should not exceed 30 single sided, not including covers, table of contents and section dividers.

The following items shall be included in your Statement of Work (SOW):

Cover Transmittal Letter (*1 page max.*) – On company letterhead, provide a narrative which introduces the firm and team highlighting the special strengths of the firm to perform the work requested in this RFP. The letter should be signed by an authorized principal of the proposing consulting firm.

Organization, Personnel and Staffing (*9 pages max., 25 points max.*) – Provide a brief description of all key personnel to be involved and their relationship to the services to be provided.

- Include names, titles, fields of expertise, and relevant state and local area experience for all proposed personnel and staff.
- Identify the Project Manager for the proposed services.

Firm Qualifications, Experience and References (*10 pages max., 25 points max.*) – Provide a narrative describing the firm's qualifications to perform the project work. Provide minimum three references and information on past relevant experience, including:

- Customer Name
- Project Name
- Award Amount
- Award Date
- Completion Date
- Reference Contact
- Project Description

Project Approach (*5 pages max., 35 points max.*) – Provide a narrative which shows your firm's understanding of the project's requirements and documents a logical technical approach to the project scope of work. Include a general work plan as well as the proposed approach to undertaking the scope of work described earlier in this RFP. Provide a detailed project schedule that illustrates the duration of each task.

2. COST PROPOSAL

Pricing (*6 pages max., 15 points max.*)– The pricing component shall be uploaded electronically as a **SEPARATE attachment**. This attachment shall provide an itemized pricing sheet for providing all services listed in the SOW. Include a detailed breakdown of proposed pricing for the project. This section will be reviewed last. **Pricing shall not be mentioned anywhere in the body of the proposal.** *Please note that pricing is only a portion of the evaluation criteria for award*

EVALUATION CRITERIA

1. Phase 1

No.	Evaluation Criteria	Scoring Method	Weight (Points)
1.	Organization, Personnel, and Staffing Phase 1 will be the initial evaluation of Proposals. Does the firm appear to have staffing that is suitable for the City's project?	Points Based	25 (29.4% of Total)
2.	Qualifications, Experience, and References 	Points Based	25 (29.4% of Total)
3.	Project Approach Is the approach logical and practical? Will it afford balanced participation by all project participants? Is the approach likely to lead to a quality product?	Points Based	35 (41.2% of Total)

2. Phase 2

No.	Evaluation Criteria	Scoring Method	Weight (Points)
1.	Pricing The Proposer must provide a project budget breakdown – at a minimum -- by major class of deliverables. Travel, materials, and production costs must be included but need not be separately detailed. In the evaluation of a Proposal, the potential for strategic planning quality (i.e., other evaluation criteria) matters more than pricing.	Points Based	15 (100% of Total)

3. Phase 3 - Interviews

No.	Evaluation Criteria	Scoring Method	Weight (Points)
1.	Organization, Personnel, and Staffing Phase 3 will consist of a separate, post-interview evaluation of Proposals. Does the firm appear to have staffing that is suitable for the City's project?	Points Based	25 (25% of Total)
2.	Qualifications, Experience, and References 	Points Based	25 (25% of Total)

3.	Project Approach Is the approach logical and practical? Will it afford balanced participation by all project participants? Is the approach likely to lead to a quality product?	Points Based	50 <i>(50% of Total)</i>
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VENDOR SUBMISSIONS

1. Technical Proposal*

See Submittal Content Section for more information.

Pricing shall not be mentioned anywhere in the body of the Technical Proposal.

*Response required

2. Cost Proposal*

See Submittal Content Section for more information.

*Response required

3. Standard City of Aurora Contract*

Please download the below documents, complete, and upload.

- [Sample Standard Contract RF...](#)

*Response required

4. Contact Information*

Please download the below documents, complete, and upload.

- [COA Contact Information.docx](#)

*Response required

5. References*

Sufficient references of all like public and/or private agencies must be presented below. Listing must include company name, contact person, telephone number and date purchased. All Proposers, as a condition of and prior to entry into a contract, agree that a complete background investigation of the principals of the Proposer and all employees who will work on the project may be made. Proposers agree to cooperate with the appropriate City of Aurora personnel to supply all information necessary to complete these investigations. The City of Aurora in its complete discretion may disqualify any Proposer, including low Proposer, and may void any contract previously entered into based on its background investigation.

*Response required

6. Sub-Contractor List

Please provide the following information for each subcontractor:

Company:

Address:

City, State, Zip:

Phone Number:

Contact Person:

7. Eligibility*

By signing this Proposal, the Proposer hereby certifies that they are not barred from bidding on this Proposal as a result of a violation of Article 33E, Public Bids of the Illinois Criminal Code of 1961, as amended (Illinois Compiled Statutes, 720 ILCS 5/33E-1).

☐ Please confirm

*Response required

8. Proposer's Certification*

I/We hereby certify that:

A. A complete set of proposal papers, as intended, has been received, and that I/We will abide by the contents and/or information received and/or contained herein.

B. I/We have not entered into any collusion or other unethical practices with any person, firm, or employee of the City which would in any way be construed as unethical business practice.

C. I/We have adopted a written sexual harassment policy which is in accordance with the requirements of Federal, State and local laws, regulations and policies and further certify that I/We are also in compliance with all equal employment practice requirements contained in Public Act 87-1257 (effective July 1, 1993) and 775 ILCS 5/2-105 (A).

D. I/We operate a drug free environment and drugs are not allowed in the workplace or satellite locations as well as City of Aurora sites in accordance with the Drug Free Workplace Act of January, 1992.

E. The Proposer is not barred from bidding on the Project, or entering into this contract as a result of a violation of either Section 33E-3 or 33E-4 of the Illinois Criminal Code, or any similar offense of "bid rigging" or "bid rotating" of any state or the United States.

F. I/We will abide by all other Federal, State and local codes, rules, regulations, ordinances and statutes.

☐ Please confirm

*Response required

9. Proposer's Tax Certification*

The Proposer's Executing Officer, being first duly sworn on oath, deposes and states that all statements made herein are made on behalf of the Proposer, that this respondent is authorized to make them and that the statements contained herein are true and correct.

Proposer deposes, states and certifies that Proposer is not barred from contracting with any unit of local government in the State of Illinois as result of a delinquency in payment of any tax administered by the Illinois Department of Revenue unless Proposer is contesting, in accordance with the procedures established by the appropriate statute, its liability for the tax or the amount of the tax, all as provided for in accordance with 65 ILCS 5/11-42.1-1.

☐ Please confirm

*Response required

10. Additional Information

