



Westside  
Future Fund

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

RFQ ISSUE DATE: June 15, 2018

RFQ SUBMISSION DUE DATE: July 13, 2018

## **WESTSIDE FUTURE FUND OVERVIEW**

*"What we're doing is putting a stake in the ground for the active development of the most challenged part of the City of Atlanta. The Westside Future Fund will be vital to the future development of the Martin Luther King Jr. Drive corridor and West Atlanta community. Backed by a dynamic public-private partnership, the Westside Future Fund will work to secure a stronger, healthier future and spur job creation, civic engagement and business investment for historic Westside neighborhoods."*

- Former City of Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed

The Westside Future Fund ("WFF") is a not-for-profit organization with the mission to reinvigorate community growth by coordinating and accelerating efforts to elevate the quality of life for residents in Atlanta's historic Westside neighborhoods. We do this by connecting resources with needs; collaborating on strategies; convening the right people for action; and coordinating all these efforts, which are vital to the Westside's long-term success.

WFF was established in December 2014 out of the vision and leadership of the Atlanta Committee for Progress, the coalition of top CEOs and leaders from Atlanta's private sector, universities and nonprofits who work in partnership with the Mayor of Atlanta. Recognizing the long-term growth inequity in Atlanta's Historic Westside, the Atlanta Committee for Progress committed in 2014 to fostering transformational change through a collaborative approach. This commitment led to the creation of WFF.

### ***A Vision for Collaboration and Engagement***

The vision, however, was set in early 2013. Partnering with Atlanta Falcons owner and The Home Depot co-founder Arthur Blank, then-Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed announced that the new Falcons stadium would be located adjacent to the Historic Westside and serve as a catalyst for growth and change in the storied neighborhoods of Vine City, English Avenue, Ashview Heights, and Atlanta University Center.

Cementing the commitment, the City of Atlanta and The Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation made catalytic lead investments of \$15 million each. Chick-fil-A Chairman and CEO Dan Cathy and the Chick-fil-A Foundation were also early, momentum-building investors and have devoted significant philanthropic capital and leadership resources. In fact, Vine City is now home to the community's first Chick-fil-A, a major contributor to the economic development of the area and the provider of 50-60 new job opportunities for area residents.

Many other major Atlanta-based companies have made significant foundation-setting contributions in support of the vision, including but not limited to Delta Air Lines, UPS, SunTrust, Georgia Power, The Home Depot, The Coca-Cola Company, Equifax, Cox Enterprises, ICE and Holder.

***A Groundbreaking Approach to Transformation***

In collaboration with a host of execution partners across multiple community sectors, WFF is committed to creating and curating an eco-system that disrupts the cycle of poverty. Based on best-practice research in community revitalization, WFF has identified and developed plans for four Impact Focus Areas needing simultaneous attention: **Safety and Security, Cradle-to-Career Education, Health and Wellness, and Mixed-Income Communities.**

WFF serves as the backbone coordinating organization for this collective effort. Through its host of cross-sector partners, the effort is already charting progress, such as:

- (1) City of Atlanta winning the highly-competitive \$30 million HUD Choice Neighborhood Grant to support the development of affordable housing options
- (2) Reducing crime by 35% since the launch of the Atlanta Police Foundation’s Westside Security Plan, which also includes the opening of the AT-PROMISE Center, a community youth crime diversion program
- (3) Training hundreds of residents in real-world, career-path jobs via Westside Works, which has resulted in more than \$12.1 million in wages earned by program graduates to date
- (4) Improving financial health and wellness for Westside families and small businesses as a result of the opening the “On the Rise” Financial Center
- (5) Adding green space and environmental infrastructure with the groundbreaking of Cook Park
- (6) Adding 21 new faculty members at Hollis Innovation Academy as a result of the Westside Future Funds’ partnership with Atlanta Public Schools

- (7) The YMCA's recently announced new headquarters, the Leadership and Learning Center, which will contain six model Head Start classrooms serving 70+ neighborhood children
- (8) Launching the Westside Volunteer Corps, which has already deployed thousands of volunteers across the four historic neighborhoods in support of its more than 60 nonprofit partners
- (9) Completing the Atlanta Beltline's Westside Trail, a \$42 million, 14-foot-wide multi-use trail that opened September 2017 with 14 access points and more than 40 acres of greenway

### ***A Commitment to the People and History of the Westside***

At the core of the WFF's mission is its dedication to the past, present, and future residents of the four Historic Westside neighborhoods. These four neighborhoods hold historic and cultural significance to Atlanta and to the world. These neighborhoods include the world's largest consortium of historically black colleges and universities, have a rich historical narrative of black Atlanta academic, religious, political and business leadership, and were home to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Julian Bond, Maynard Jackson, and other luminaries of the Civil Rights Movement.

WFF's holistic community development strategy—which includes the retention of long-time residents—centers on the Westside Land Use Framework Plan, which will guide positive change and position these in-town neighborhoods as once again whole and vibrant. The award-winning Plan is a tangible outcome of the commitment to preserve this rich history and ensure current residents can benefit from future development. The Plan calls for initiatives that reduce blight, incorporate sustainable practices and balance affordable, market-rate housing.

The commitment is also being put into action through WFF's Anti--Displacement Tax Fund, which was launched in 2017 and is funded completely by philanthropic support.

### ***Charting a Path Forward***

As the revitalization efforts gain momentum, the City of Atlanta and The Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation continue to set the pace. On Sept. 8, 2017, the City and Arthur Blank announced an additional \$32 million worth of investments, bringing the Blank Foundation's total commitment to \$30 million and the City of Atlanta's total to nearly \$115 million.

As WFF looks to foster the holistic transformation of the Westside's four historic neighborhoods, it will take the support of all Atlantans, working together, to make that happen.

## **TARGET AREA OVERVIEW**

Located immediately west of Downtown Atlanta, the Target Area comprises the historic neighborhoods of English Avenue, Vine City, the Atlanta University Center and Ashview Heights. Westside Atlanta has been home to several of the most prominent African American civil rights leaders, business people, educators, pastors, physicians, authors, musicians and filmmakers. As such, WFF acknowledges that many residents of these communities want to ensure that this profound historical legacy is preserved, in both its physical and cultural manifestations, and WFF recognizes its role as a steward, alongside legacy residents, of the preservation, restoration, and reinvention of the historic Westside. Over several years of community engagement, WFF has developed its mission and objectives to both benefit legacy residents and suggest a forward-looking vision for these communities.

In the 1960s, these historic neighborhoods were home to approximately 50,000 working, middle and upper middle-class African American families that thrived until suburbanization in the 1970s has led to severe disinvestment that persists today. While the neighborhood is still primarily African American (90%, compared to 54% of Atlanta overall), these decades of neglect and blight have taken a toll on this community and its quality of life. Today, the population has dropped by over 70%, with a current resident population of 15,000—including 9,000 Atlanta University Center students—who are primarily renters, with only 8% resident homeownership. More than 50% of the residents of the once-thriving Westside live below the federal poverty line, which correlates with poor health outcomes, low student achievement, and lagging employment, among many detriments.

The physical condition of the neighborhoods reflects this social and cultural despair. Research led by WFF indicates that over half of the nearly 3,800 properties with the Target Area are vacant lots and structures that perpetuate rampant blight and illicit activity. Further, 30% of these properties are considered poor to dilapidated. Of the owner-occupied homes, approximately 64% are in need of critical repairs, 15% of which are further classified as significantly deteriorated. And 30% of rental units are likewise considered dilapidated.

Given the area's proximity to the booming and ever-expanding employment and educational centers of Downtown and Midtown, Atlanta University Center, Georgia Tech and Georgia State University, it possesses a unique opportunity to reverse these trends and accomplish catalytic, yet thoughtful, revitalization. In the same vein, the Westside presents one of the few areas of significant scale for Atlanta to embrace a compassionate and people-focused ideology based on affordability, diversity, and sustainability to achieve a vibrant, mixed-income community. Without coordination, capital, and a concerted effort to address serious community needs like affordable housing, the Westside will follow other historic Atlanta neighborhoods toward unchecked gentrification and dramatic socioeconomic upheaval. Legacy residents, especially low-income tenants, may be displaced and Atlanta – one of

the fastest growing cities in the U.S. - could lose its last and best opportunity to be a national model for responsible growth and shared prosperity.

Several recent major investments have initiated a revitalization of the historic Westside neighborhoods, including:

- the investment of \$15 million by Invest Atlanta, the official economic development authority for the City of Atlanta, set aside by former City of Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed from the Westside Tax Allocation District (TAD) for the English Avenue and Vine City neighborhoods;
- the \$30 million investment by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban;
- Development's Choice Neighborhoods Program in the Vine City, Ashview Heights, and Atlanta University Center;
- the Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation's \$30 million investment in Atlanta's Westside; and
- the \$1.5 billion development of Mercedes-Benz Stadium and its attendant community revitalization efforts.

As shown in Figure 1, the official boundary of WFF's Target Area includes the area south Jefferson Street, west of Northside Drive, north of Interstate 20, and east of Joseph E. Lowery Boulevard. The Ashview Heights neighborhood extends west of Joseph E. Lowery Boulevard to the new Westside Beltline Trail. The Target Area is also easily accessible to other prominent areas of the City by major thoroughfares such as the ever-popular Westside Provisions District to the north; the forthcoming Westside Reservoir Park; Ponce City Market and Old Fourth Ward by way of North Avenue and Joseph E. Boone Boulevard; and the budding renaissance of South Downtown via MLK Drive. Further, the Westside encompasses two MARTA (Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority) stations and contains a potential spur of the Atlanta Beltline. Suffice it to say, the Westside is a prime location to augment the city-wide resurgence that Atlanta has witnessed. But our most vulnerable community members and low-income residents must not be left behind.

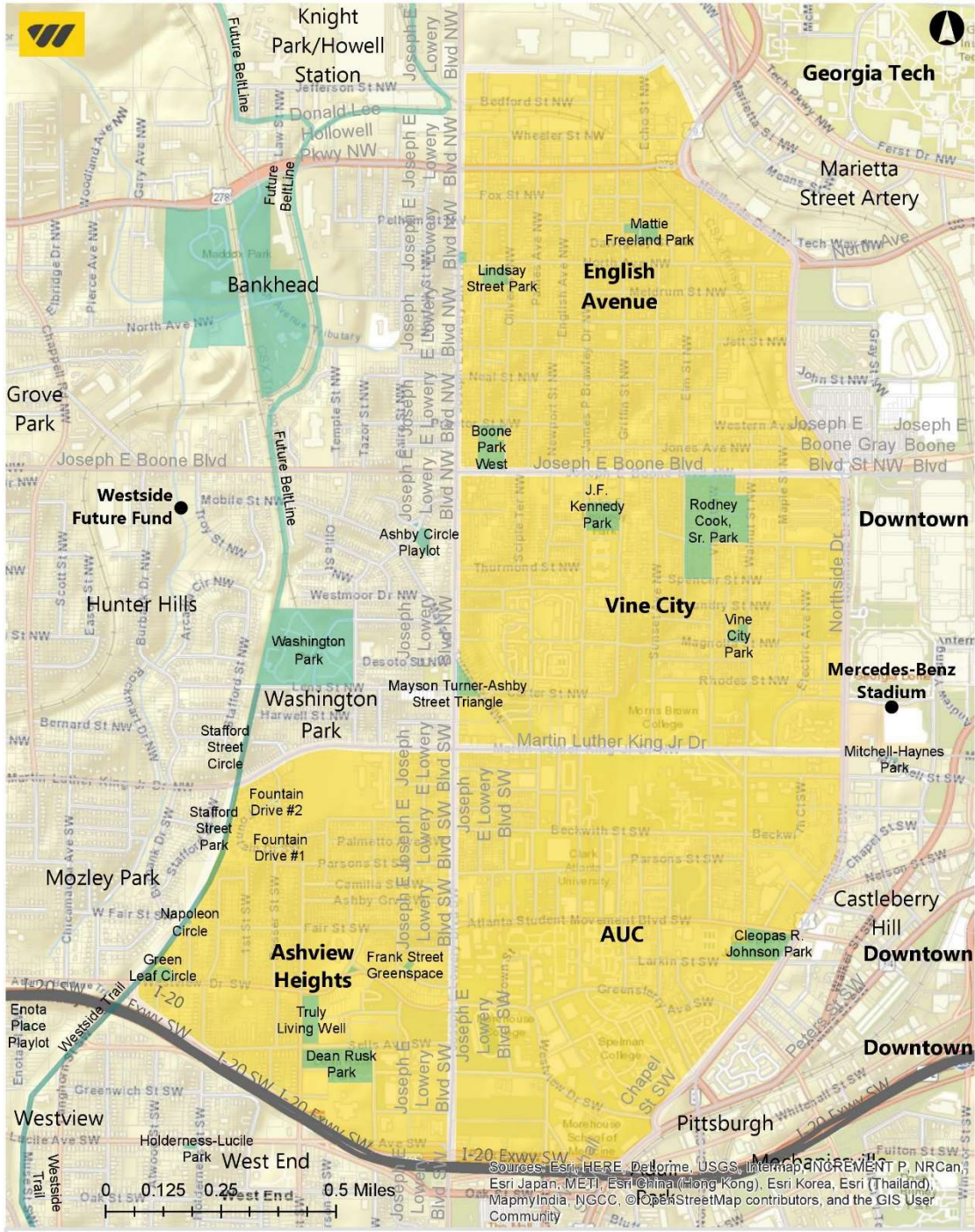


Figure 1. Target Area Map.

## **GOALS & EXPECTED OUTCOMES**

Within WFF's four previously mentioned areas of focus, its Mixed-Income Community Impact Strategy entails the retention of existing legacy residents and repopulation of the Target Area with an altogether diverse constituency. The purpose of this RFQ is to identify and pre-qualify a pool of development partners who can assist in the execution of this Impact Strategy, which will include the renovation of multi-family and single-family properties within the Target Area, with a primary focus on affordable and innovative housing solutions.

WFF's most urgent near-term challenge is providing quality rental housing for the working poor and residents living on a fixed income. We estimate that half of the rental households in WFF's target neighborhoods earn less than \$20K a year—approximately 1,600 total— and should not pay more than \$500 per month towards rent. Whereas most research suggests that no more than 30% of a household's annual income should go towards housing, over 25% of households in the target neighborhoods pay rents exceeding 50% of their income. And the need is increasingly more urgent as rent has increased by over 20% since 2012 in parts of the Target Area. <sup>1</sup>

Rental housing that meets these income parameters does exist, however it is often substandard and located in severely blighted neighborhoods. Housing that *is* affordable and decent is rapidly disappearing from our Target Area as a consequence of successful revitalization efforts. More importantly, the city's growing population and attendant housing demand is escalating costs and already beginning to displace legacy residents, most of whom are low-income. Furthermore, a majority of existing rental properties are privately-owned; thus, residents in these units are at a high risk of displacement given that most owners are profit motivated.

Given these conditions and based on exhaustive research performed in conjunction with the aforementioned Westside Land Use Framework Plan, WFF has defined the following long-term vision:

- Preserve and stabilize the existing number of affordable housing units and increase the standard of living, focusing on housing for resident households earning up to 60% Area Median Income (AMI)
- Increase the rate single-family homeownership among existing legacy residents, prioritizing workforce housing, or households earning between 60%-120% AMI
- Repopulate the Target Neighborhoods to an estimated 40,000 residents and reduce the concentration of poverty without displacing existing residents

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<sup>1</sup> Immergluck, Dan. "Affordability First: Concerns about Preserving Housing Options for Existing and New Residents on Atlanta's Westside." 2016.



- Normalize the ratio of owner- and renter-occupied housing units, aiming for a balance of 25% homeownership and 75% rental

In order to effectuate these long-term outcomes, WFF has likewise established the following objectives for the next five years:

- Demonstrate delivery of quality rental units by developing at least 800 multifamily housing units for households earning less than 60% AMI, along with an additional 400 units of mixed-income housing;
- Renovate or develop at least 225 single-family homes serving a range of income levels; and
- Provide a variety of unique and innovative housing types that align with the vision identified in the Land Use Action Plan, as well as the design context of the neighborhood

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## **SCOPE OF WORK**

For the purpose of this RFQ, respondents are expected to demonstrate their experience in developing affordable or otherwise mixed-income housing developments similar in scope to the properties defined below. Respondents are not necessarily expected to demonstrate experience with each type of development project, but only the types of developments they are interested in assisting WFF in executing.

### ***Small Multi-Family Properties:***

- Renovation of existing improvements or new construction ranging in size from 4-50 total housing units

### ***Large Multi-Family Properties:***

- Primarily new construction exceeding 50 total units

### ***Single-Family Properties:***

- Renovation of existing structures or demolition and new construction
- Detached single-family or attached townhomes
- May entail scattered site development

Development services for such properties may include, but are not limited to:

- Assist with procurement of typical due diligence items such as environmental assessments, property surveys, geotechnical reports, property condition assessments, and zoning verification;
- Coordinate with design and engineering consultants and recommend alternative solutions whenever design details affect construction feasibility or schedules;
- Coordinate the work of design and engineering consultants to complete the construction of the Project in accordance with the objectives as to cost, time and quality, and provide sufficient personnel with authority to achieve such objectives;
- Ensure that the Plans and Specifications are in compliance with all applicable codes, laws, ordinances, rules and regulations;
- Reconcile projects with the Westside Land Use Framework Plan, a design and implementation strategy for the equitable revitalization of the historic Westside neighborhoods;
- Coordinate project efforts with the City of Atlanta, community civic and neighborhood associations, and other key private and public stakeholders;
- Act on behalf of the WFF in its relations with any governmental agency or authority with respect to all matters relating to the construction of projects;
- Prepare bidding documents and criteria for bidders, establish bidding schedules and conduct pre-bid conferences to familiarize bidders with the bidding documents;
- Receive bids, prepare bid analyses and make recommendations to WFF for award of contracts or rejection of bids;
- Negotiate all necessary contracts and subcontracts related to construction and execution of projects;
- Cause the construction of projects to be completed in a prompt and expeditious manner, consistent with good workmanship;
- Investigate and recommend a schedule for purchase by WFF of all materials and equipment requiring long lead time procurement, coordinate the schedule with design and engineering consultants and expedite and coordinate delivery of such purchases;
- Provide regular monitoring of schedules as construction progresses, identify potential variances between scheduled and probable completion dates, review the schedule for work not started or incomplete, recommend to WFF adjustments in the schedule to meet the probable completion date, provide summary reports of such monitoring, and document all changes in the schedule;
- Keep, or cause to be kept, accounts and cost records as to the construction of projects;

- Provide regular monitoring of the approved estimate of construction cost, show actual costs for activities in process and estimates for uncompleted tasks, identify variances between actual and budgeted or estimated costs and advise WFF well in advance whenever projected costs may exceed budgets or estimates;
- Develop and implement a system for review and processing of change orders as to the construction of projects;
- Develop and implement a procedure for the review and processing of applications by subcontractors for progress and final payments;
- Obtain the design and engineering consultants' applicable certificates that work is substantially complete, and inspect the consultants' work;
- Secure all building code approvals and obtain certificates of occupancy for the Property; and
- Provide Project close-out binders, detailed maintenance schedules, and coordinate turn-over to property management.

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## **SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

WFF requests the most complete articulation of the respondent's qualifications that can be credibly prepared based on the information and requirements contained in this RFQ. Successful responses may include necessary due diligence in order to meet the requirements of this RFQ.

In order to be deemed responsive for evaluation under this RFQ, submissions are limited to thirty (30) pages, inclusive of all submission requirements, narratives, and addendum. Each response submitted for this RFQ must contain, at minimum, the following information:

### ***A. Letter of Intent:***

State the full name(s) and address(es) of the organization(s) and the branch office(s) or other subordinate element(s) that will perform or assist in performing the services described herein. Identify the firm's primary contact name, phone numbers, and email addresses. Indicate type of firm ownership (individual, partnership or corporation) and explain any proposed team or joint venture or partnership relationships.

### ***B. Statement of Experience:***

Provide a straightforward, complete and concise description of the consultant's capabilities to satisfy the requirements outlined in this RFQ. For each of the below development categories in which they wish to be

considered, respondents must describe their relevant experience, detailing a minimum of five (5) recent projects (within the past seven years) in similar conditions and with similar size and/or scope, and any associated fees.

- Small Multi-Family (up to 50 units)
- Large Multi-Family (50+ units)
- Single-Family homes

***C. Team Qualifications:***

Provide the names and resumes of leadership and key staff members. Include a team organization statement defining their anticipated roles on the team. Provide the names of key principals (defined as persons having greater than 20% ownership interest) and percentage of ownership interest for any participating sole proprietor, partnership, or joint venture. Identify who will be the daily point of contact for WFF staff. Please also note any pending legal actions pending against the firm. Each key principal must submit a Conflict of Interest disclosure, attached to this RFQ.

***D. Fee Schedule***

Provide hourly billing rates for team members according to their roles and responsibilities.

***E. Statement of Project Understanding & Approach:***

Demonstrate project understanding, including details of the team's familiarity and experience with providing the development services enumerated above.

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## **SUBMISSION DUE DATE**

Each responder shall submit their qualification responses digitally via email to:

Westside Future Fund

Brandon Burrows, Associate of Real Estate

Brandon@westsidefuturefund.org

by 4:30 p.m. EST on July 13, 2018. Responses not received by this time shall not be considered.

Proposals should be clearly marked “RFQ—WFF Pre-Qualified Developers.”

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## **SELECTION PROCESS**

WFF hopes to select a pool of respondents (“Qualified Developer”), based on responses to this solicitation. Promptly following the receipt of proposals, WFF will evaluate the respondents based on their submitted proposals and invite a limited number of qualified firms/teams to present their qualifications in greater detail.

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## **EVALUATION CRITERIA**

WFF reserves the right to reject any or all submittals, or to make modifications to the RFQ, if needed. The following criteria will be used in evaluating qualifications:

### ***A. Firm Experience:***

A key consideration will be the demonstrated experience of the Qualified Developer in similar work and a record of successful completion of similar projects. The firm’s ability to take on additional work, demonstrated understanding of WFF’s goals and purposes for this project, specific management approach, commitment to diversity/inclusion, and the firm’s ability to offer the breadth and quality of services required should also be emphasized. The selected consultant(s) should demonstrate evidence of broad knowledge of best practices in affordable housing development according to product type.

**B. Project Team:**

WFF will give weight to the individual qualifications and relevant experience for all persons and sub-consultants who will be actively engaged in this project. Consideration will include qualifications of key principals and personnel, project manager’s experience, and sub-consultant (if any) experience and qualifications.

**C. Project Precedents:**

Qualified Developers must provide no less than five (5) examples of similar, relevant projects completed by their firm.

**D. Ability to Understand, Innovate Upon, and Complete the Scope of Work:**

Qualified Developers should communicate their ability to understand and innovate upon the scope of work. Special emphasis will be placed on creative public engagement and the innovative use of technology to improve the planning process.

**E. EBO Program:**

WFF’s Equal Business Opportunity (EBO) program requires that a best-faith effort is made to avail any potential contracting or sub-contracting opportunities to qualified minority and women-owned businesses. Please describe your firm’s approach to diversity and inclusion and indicate if you plan to sub-contract any portion of the project.

**F. References:**

References will be requested from and will be contacted for all final candidates.

**G. Responsiveness to the RFQ and Compliance with Instructions.**

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**TIMELINE**

RFQ Issued:	June 15, 2018
Inquiries Due:	June 29, 2018
Responses to Respondents Due:	July 6, 2018
RFQ Responses Due:	July 13, 2018
Finalists Selected:	July 27, 2018
Interviews (if required):	Week of August 8, 2018
Notification of Respondents:	August 17, 2018

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## **OTHER INFORMATION**

### A. Equal Opportunity Statement:

WFF is an equal opportunity employer and will select its consultants, vendors and partners without regard to age, disability, religion, creed or belief, political affiliation, race, sex, or ethnicity. WFF intends to exert a best-faith effort to proactively avail any potential contracting or sub-contracting opportunities to qualified minority and women-owned businesses.

### B. Submittal Costs:

WFF will not reimburse any costs incurred prior to a formal notice to proceed should a contract award result from this solicitation. All submittal costs in conjunction with this RFQ shall be borne by the submitting firm.

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## **QUESTIONS & CONTACT**

Questions concerning this Request for Qualifications or the review process may be directed solely by email to Brandon Burrows, [Brandon@westsidefuturefund.org](mailto:Brandon@westsidefuturefund.org). Please include "Westside Future Fund Developer RFQ" as the subject line. In order to maintain fair process, telephonic inquiries will not be addressed.