



Columbia Empowerment Zone, Inc. (CEZ, INC.) Request for Qualifications (RFQ)

CEZ, Inc. Legal Services, RFQ# CEZ01022020

RFP #01022020 – CEZ, Inc. Legal Services

January 2, 2020

Bid/ RFP Due Date: Friday, January 24, 2020 – 11:00 am

Proposals received after the above-cited time will be considered late and are not acceptable.

Background information:

The Columbia Empowerment Zone, Inc. (CEZ) is a nonprofit economic development corporation whose mission is to efficiently, effectively and enthusiastically create and support economic development opportunities in the City of Columbia. CEZ, Inc. achieves this mission by ensuring activities create, retain and reinvest wealth in the City of Columbia. The guiding principles and values are: accountability, integrity, inclusion, outcomes and stewardship. Working closely with City departments and the City administration and other agencies that promote economic development and entrepreneurship CEZ, Inc. is a valuable key to assuring that small businesses have a place to grow and thrive in the City of Columbia.

Since CEZ's inception, which derived from the 1999 Sumter Columbia Empowerment Zone, the organization has helped to implement many programs that support job training for City residents and incentivized businesses to start and grow in the City of Columbia. The following programs were implemented in the City: Commercial Loan Fund, CEZ Business Improvement/Façade Program, Youth Employment Program (YEO), Neighborhood Employment Program (NEO), Work Initiative Program (WIP), EZ Tax Incentives Program, Vacant & Abandoned Building Incentive Program. CEZ has also accomplished the purchase of and recruitment of business to the North Main Plaza phases I, and II.

CEZ, Inc.'s overarching goal continues to focus on reinvestment efforts that create jobs and revitalize Columbia. Our efforts support and uplift cultural diversity, urban renewal, residential vibrancy, sound economic investments and financial prosperity. It's past, current and future development programs and initiatives are the vehicles that have and will continue to steer both commercial and residential growth and renewal.

The CEZ, Inc. Board meets on the third Wednesday of each month at the Russell A. McCoy III Conference Room at 3200 Grand Street, Columbia, SC 29203. The CEZ, Inc. attorney may be required to attend CEZ, Inc. board meetings, as requested. These meetings are regularly scheduled for the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 12:00 pm until the meeting is adjourned. Meetings generally adjourn at 1:30 pm and may be rescheduled as necessary by the Board from time to time.

Inquires/Communications:

All communications related to responding to the Request for Qualifications are to be directed via email through the Executive Director, Felicia Maloney at Felicia.Maloney@columbiasc.gov. No phone calls will be accepted.

Scope of Work:

Provide legal advice, counsel, training, consultation, and opinions to the Executive Director and/or Board on a variety of assignments according to the following tiers listed below with Tier 1 as the most prevalent issues and Tier 2 as less prevalent issues:

Tier 1

- Debt collection
- Prepare and review memoranda, orders, and resolutions upon request by Executive Director and/or Board
- Contract Negotiations
- Representation of CEZ, Inc. before all SC Courts
- Loan Contracts
- Community/Economic Development Contracts

Tier 2

- Coordinate with other special counsel as needed
- Lease/Rental Contracts
- Advise on Corporate Governance issues
- Grant Reviews
- Real Estate Closings
- Attend Board and other meetings, as requested
- FOIA requests and public disclosure issues/notices

Qualifications Due Date:

The Columbia Empowerment Zone, Inc. (CEZ, Inc.) requests a Statement of Qualifications and related information for contracted CEZ, Inc. Legal Services. Sealed Statement of Qualifications are due in the CEZ, Inc. Office, at 3200 Grand Street, Columbia, SC 29203 by **11:00 a.m. (EST) on January 24, 2019.**

How to Apply:

Responders should submit four (4) copies of sealed Statement of Qualification labeled "do not open" and "**Request for Qualifications for CEZ, Inc. Legal Services, RFQ#CEZ01022020**" (no facsimile please) on or before **11:00 am EST on January 24, 2019**, to the following address:

Columbia Empowerment Zone, Inc.
Attn: Felicia Maloney, Executive Director
3200 Grand Street
Columbia, SC 29203
Telephone: (803) 748-0964

Proposer's Specifications:

In writing, please provide the following:

Services Provided: Include as Attachment A

Identify any, or all of, the CEZ, Inc.'s outlined "scope of work" that your or firm provides.

Professional Business History and Experience: Include as Attachment B

Provide a narrative description of your or your firm's history. Include a narrative description of the firm experience.

Identify any economic development corporations, non-profits, or agencies the firm may have represented. Identify experience with municipal law issues, including land use, zoning, growth management, contract law, personnel, municipalities, municipal utility districts, water district, and other related specialties.

Please explain any grievance or disciplinary actions that may have been taken against the attorney/firm.

Proposed CEZ, Inc. attorney, team: Include as Attachment C

Name and describe the attorney(s) and/or team proposed, including the designated CEZ, Inc. attorney.

For each attorney on the team proposed, please identify the law school attended, year of graduation, and year in which each passed the bar examination in South Carolina.

Provide a resume for each team member, with considerable detail in the experience and qualifications for CEZ, Inc. attorney and any significant assisting attorneys.

If specialty attorneys or additional resources are available through your firm (addition to the team) to meet special needs, please identify them and their specialties.

Fee Structure: Include as Attachment D

Please describe your fee structure whether flat fee or hourly rate. If an hourly applies describe whether the rate is different for any proposed team member(s).

Ability to perform the work: Include as Attachment E

Identify your or your firm's ability to perform the work contained under the **Scope of Work** stated above. Also, identify the physical location of your primary offices.

References: Include as Attachment F

Provide three references for the designated CEZ, Inc. attorney and any team alternates including references from other nonprofit organizations.

After receipt of the responses to the request for qualifications from prospective proposers, CEZ will rank of the prospective bidders in writing from most qualified to least qualified on the basis of the information provided. CEZ reserves the right to interview prospective proposers before soliciting proposals from at least the top two prospective proposers by means of an invitation for proposals.