

**DETERMINATION AND FINDINGS  
FOR A  
SOLE SOURCE PROCUREMENT**

**CONTRACT NO:** RQ860727

**CAPTION:** EcoDistricts Consulting Services and Technical Support

**PROPOSED CONTRACTOR:** EcoDistricts

**PROGRAM AGENCY:** District Department of the Environment

**FINDINGS**

1. **AUTHORIZATION:**

D.C. Official Code §2-354.04 and 27 DCMR §§ 1304,1702

2. **MINIMUM NEED:**

The District intends to be a leader in a new type of neighborhood-scale sustainable development called an “ecodistrict.” Public and private organizations in the District and partners in cities across the United States have worked with a foundation-funded, non-governmental organization called “EcoDistricts” to develop and promote a framework for the planning, implementation and certification of highly sustainable urban communities.

The District Department of the Environment (DDOE), in coordination with sister agencies the Department of General Services (DGS), DC Office of Planning (DCOP), Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development (DMPED), two federal agencies the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) and U.S. General Services Administration, National Capital Region (GSA), two business improvement districts the DowntownDC BID and the Southwest BID, and other partners intend to participate in an “EcoDistricts Target Cities” pilot program. This national effort managed by EcoDistricts will provide services to projects in seven other U.S. cities, and is supported by foundation funders including the Kresge Foundation and Bullitt Foundation.

EcoDistricts issued a national request for applications for projects interested in the Target Cities pilot program. EcoDistricts’ request for applications indicated that each participating project would be required to contribute funding. Through contributions from foundation funders, EcoDistricts will provide matching funding for each project accepted as a Target Cities project.

In response to EcoDistricts’ request for applications, the collaborative group of agencies and organizations prepared applications for three ecodistrict projects in the city: the St. Elizabeths-Congress Heights EcoDistrict, SW EcoDistrict, and DowntownDC EcoDistrict. In an announcement on June 24, 2014 by EcoDistricts and the Clinton Global Initiative, the three District projects were accepted into the Target Cities program. In accepting these three District-based projects into the program, EcoDistricts agreed to provide \$60,000 in matching funds for

each project. DDOE now seeks to procure \$160,000 in consulting services over two years to support the execution of the Target Cities pilot program.

DDOE, needs a contractor to provide specialized expertise and technical support to facilitate planning of the three neighborhood-scale projects in the District and to help advance practices and spread lessons learned from these projects more broadly across the city. The contractor will also help the District provide a national and international platform to recognize and highlight the sustainability achievements of these projects.

The qualifications of the desired contractor are unique to the ecodistrict movement. The contractor must have experience envisioning and defining effective frameworks for neighborhood-scale planning, managing ecodistrict planning projects, and providing world-class expertise in neighborhood-scale sustainability solutions. Specific expertise should include:

1. designing shared energy, stormwater, waste, and transportation management;
2. engaging diverse partners and communities;
3. supporting multi-party management structures;
4. assessing policy options to overcome legal and regulatory barriers;
5. producing corporate and contractual instruments; and
6. managing coordinated project planning and development teams.

The contractor must also present the characteristics and capabilities that rest on a strong foundation of leadership and innovation in ecodistrict activity:

1. demonstrate international recognition for its ecodistrict-related achievements and ideas;
2. offer an established framework for providing services;
3. connect the District's ecodistrict projects to a national network of ecodistrict projects teams and developers;
4. provide ample opportunities for the District to showcase its projects' successes;
5. provide matching funds from foundations or other partners to leverage the District's investment in the contractor's services.

The proposed term of the contract is from the date of award through September 30, 2014, with options to extend for an additional two years, subject to the availability of funds.

3. **ESTIMATED REASONABLE PRICE:** \$80,000

4. **FACTS THAT JUSTIFY SOLE SOURCE PROCUREMENT:**

DDOE, in consultation with other District and federal agency and private sector partners, has determined that only one organization presently exists with the knowledge, experience and capability to provide the required services. This is the non-profit organization called "EcoDistricts," based in Portland, Oregon and working on ecodistrict project development across the United States and abroad.

### **EcoDistricts Background**

EcoDistricts has spent the last five years developing and refining the ecodistrict concept, convening international meetings of professionals and government officials interested in promoting the concept. The organization began as the Portland Sustainability Institute, where it developed ecodistrict project plans in Portland, Oregon, secured foundation funding, and provided support and resources towards the implementation of a number of EcoDistrict projects throughout the United States. These include the Innovation Hub in Boston, Lloyd St. in Portland, and Capitol Hill in Seattle.<sup>1</sup>

EcoDistricts has developed educational programs that bring together those with special expertise in the components of this sustainable development and those wishing to adopt the ecodistrict concept for their community. In September, 2014, EcoDistricts will convene its fifth annual EcoDistrict Summit here in Washington, DC, providing another opportunity to highlight District projects for a national and international audience. This Summit will bring together leaders in district-scale sustainability with expertise ranging from district energy to building social equity, digital metrics, and community health.<sup>2</sup>

This organization has been particularly successful in building a community of practice around neighborhood-scale sustainability solutions. EcoDistricts has secured funding commitments from major foundations working at the cutting-edge of urban sustainability and developed partnerships with leading organizations, including the Enterprise Foundation and the US Green Building Council. It has also been successful in convening programs to educate and spread best practices. Previous EcoDistrict Summits have attracted over 2,000 of the world's leading urban planners, private sector city actors, and policy makers in attendance.<sup>3</sup> At the 2013 Summit in Boston, 114 cities were represented from across the globe.

The District has recognized the organization's capabilities and successes and the ability of the EcoDistricts framework to advance the city's environmental and sustainability goals. Mayor Gray provided supporting statements for the 2014 EcoDistricts Summit promotional materials: "If we are to meet our ambitious goal of becoming the healthiest, greenest and most livable city in the United States, we must incorporate innovation in everything we do. Our city's emerging EcoDistricts will play a critical role in shaping the District's future through innovative partnerships with local and federal governments, businesses and institutions, and neighborhoods citywide."<sup>4</sup>

EcoDistricts' Target Cities pilot program offers a suite of services found nowhere else, including existing expertise within the organization and its partners and the ongoing benefits of collaboration among the nine EcoDistrict Target Cities projects across North America. Areas of expertise include: project governance; systems development; public engagement; special peer exchange workshops and other training; and technical expertise in energy, water, waste, transportation and other issues relevant to the District's three project neighborhoods.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://ecodistricts.org/projects/profiles/>

<sup>2</sup> [http://ecodistricts.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/2013\\_Summit\\_Event\\_Report\\_web.pdf](http://ecodistricts.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/2013_Summit_Event_Report_web.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <http://ecodistricts.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/2014-EcoDistricts-Incubator-Resource-Guide.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <http://ecodistricts.org/summit/>

The organization offers, and DDOE anticipates purchasing, unique educational and project coordination services, including five community workshops to support project inception and the four stages of the EcoDistrict Framework (District Organization, District Assessment, District Projects, and District Management)<sup>5</sup>, no less than 16 hours of monthly technical support and research from EcoDistricts staff, monthly webinars with EcoDistrict peer projects and international experts, and international experts brought in to provide consulting services based on the unique objectives and needs of each project.

DDOE has conducted no market survey to find this suite of services because, based on our special knowledge of sustainable development and discussions with project partners who prepared the three EcoDistricts Target Cities applications, it concluded that no other potential vendor offers, or can offer, such coordinated, targeted services in the area of ecodistrict development and bring matching funds from leading foundations in the area of urban sustainability.

### **Key Points**

- No other consulting service can provide the depth of experience and knowledge in deploying the EcoDistricts Framework.
- No other consulting service offers the matching funds valued at \$60,000 for each Target Cities Project or brings the associated partnership and expertise of national foundations and organizational partners aligned with EcoDistricts.
- The coordinating District and federal agencies and private sector organizations came together to apply for the EcoDistricts Target Cities program and to work together through the two year duration of the Target Cities pilot program to test the latest in sustainable practices and approaches.
- The Mayor, DDOE Director, and the leadership of the other participating agencies and organizations have expressed support for pursuing an ecodistricts approach.
- No other consultant offers the amount of international recognition and connection that Target Cities offers due to its selection as a Clinton Global Initiative.
- No other consulting service provides the consulting and educational services, a national ecodistrict peer learning network, an annual Summit that attracts global leaders, and the opportunity for the District to showcase its projects to that audience.

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<sup>5</sup> [http://ecodistricts.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Target\\_Cities\\_web\\_FINAL.pdf](http://ecodistricts.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Target_Cities_web_FINAL.pdf)

**5. CERTIFICATION BY AGENCY HEAD:**

I hereby certify that the above findings are true, correct and complete.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Keith A. Anderson  
Agency Director  
District Department of the Environment

**6. CERTIFICATION BY CONTRACTING OFFICER:**

I have reviewed the above findings and certify that they are sufficient to justify the use of the sole source method of procurement under the cited authority. I certify that the notice of intent to award a sole source contract was published in accordance with 27 DCMR § 1304 and that no response was received. I recommend that the Chief Procurement Officer approve the use of the sole source procurement method for this proposed contract.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Robyn N Johnson  
Agency Contracting Officer  
District Department of the Environment

**DETERMINATION**

Based on the above findings and in accordance with the cited authority, I hereby determine that it is not feasible or practical to invoke the competitive solicitation process under either Section 402 or 403 of the District of Columbia Procurement Practices Reform Act of 2010 (D.C. Law 18-371; D.C. Official Code § 2-354.02 or 2-354.03). Accordingly, I determine that the District is justified in using the sole source method of procurement.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Robyn N Johnson  
Agency Contracting Officer  
District Department of the Environment