



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS: RainReady in Cook County south suburbs

Communications – writing, media placement, video, photography: March 24th, 2016

CNT is undertaking RainReady (RainReady.org) planning and implementation program across six communities in Cook County's southern suburbs to mitigate risks of future flooding and build broader resiliency. The six communities covered by this work are: Blue Island, Calumet City, Calumet Park, Dolton, Riverdale and Robbins. In addition, CNT is providing implementation support to the Village of Midlothian. The Village adopted its RainReady plan in February 2016 and has started on its implementation.

We are looking for communications support for this work over 12 months. The work involves writing (12 monthly blogs, 12 monthly tips columns, 12 case study stories of flood victims, media placement), videography (one video published in two stages) and photography (6-10 albums).

Your proposal can respond to one or all of these activities. While we already have an established style (<http://rainready.org/Guidance>) we welcome creative and experimental approaches to meeting our broad objectives. We are particularly keen to receive proposals from talented individuals or companies based in the south suburbs of Cook County.

Point of contact

The Project Manager is Harriet Festing, Center for Neighborhood Technology, 2125 W North Ave, Chicago, IL 60647 hfesting@cnt.org

All questions must be made via email. Respondents shall only communicate with the Project Manager regarding this RFP. Questions will be answered to all Respondents to the RFP if CNT determines that it is in CNT's best interest.

Submissions

Submit your proposal to Harriet Festing hfesting@cnt.org via email by April 7th at the latest. Your proposal should include an outline of how you will do the work, a budget to include as separate line items the cost of travel, staff, previous experience, and at least 5 samples of similar work done.

We will expect the work to start immediately on selection of the preferred contractors. Please confirm your availability in your proposal.

Selection of contractors

Contractors will be selected based on qualifications, knowledge, past experience, and other requirements, as determined by CNT in its sole discretion.

Background

RainReady (rainready.org) helps people manage flooding and drought in a time of climate change. We provide:

- Individualized services to help reduce urban flood risks
- Affordable and scalable solutions backed by solid research and analysis
- Award-winning outreach programs
- Guidance with financing
- Training courses and workshops for residents, community and municipal leaders

The RainReady approach emphasizes community leadership through a robust public engagement program and an emphasis on low-cost residential solutions.

RainReady communications support

CNT is undertaking RainReady planning and implementation program across six communities in Cook County's southern suburbs to mitigate risks of future flooding and build broader resiliency. The RainReady program consists of a community planning process and tools that focus on affordable, tangible solutions to help communities manage urban flooding. The six communities covered by this work are: Blue Island, Calumet City, Calumet Park, Dolton, Riverdale and Robbins. In addition, CNT is providing implementation support to the Village of Midlothian. The Village adopted its RainReady plan in February 2016 and has started on its implementation.

CNT is looking for communications support for this work over 12 months. Our goal is to:

- Understand the nature of flood risk and the nature of the impacts across the communities and wider region (social, economic, environmental).
- Achieve consensus on solutions that provide multiple benefits to the community: recreation and beautification, industrial site redevelopment, and residential and commercial programs.
- Provide municipal and community leaders with a clear roadmap for plan implementation, including partners, financial support, and local champions.
- Pursue plan implementation concurrent to plan development; identify partners and funding for priority projects related.

By helping us tell a strong story of the impacts and opportunities, the communications work as listed below seeks to help us achieve these objectives, by telling a frank and compelling story of the impacts and opportunities. Your proposal may address one of all of these activities.

Writing:

Blogs

The contractor will research and write 12 blogs at roughly monthly intervals. The articles will be used as content for blogs and press releases. They should be written for the general public and should be popularist in style, for example telling personal stories of people whose homes or businesses have flooded and/or who have benefited or participated in programs that reduce flooding. Each article should:

- Highlight an issue relevant to urban flooding and resilience as it relates to residents and businesses in the six communities and wider Cook County

- Put this issue within a wider national context, social, political, environmental, economic, etc.
- Involve interviews with a minimum of three people, one of whom is likely to be a resident or business (or school, place of worship, etc.) in the six communities
- At least one of these interviews will involve a visit to a person or place, likely to be within the six communities
- Be approximately 500-1,000 words in length
- Be coordinated with photography where relevant (see below)
- Please assume a minimum of five hours desk research per article

The exact list of topics to be covered will be established by CNT based on discussions with the writer, and as specific stories and opportunities arise. Examples of the kinds of articles we expect include:

1. Flood mitigation in the home, the best technologies and practices
2. Complete Streets, the benefits of combining street streets with stormwater benefits
3. Tactical urbanism and placemaking
4. Insurance and floodplain mapping
5. Workforce development in green infrastructure practices.

Monthly tips for homeowners' column

The contractor will research and write 12 monthly tips columns which CNT will distribute via our e-newsletters. They should be written for the general public and should be popularist in style. Each column should:

- Highlight an issue relevant to urban flooding and resilience as it relates to residents and businesses in the six communities and wider Cook County
- Be approximately 500 words in length
- Provide some basic cost information, and practical 'how to' information
- Please assume two hours of research per column

The exact list of topics to be covered will be established by CNT based on discussions with the writer, and as specific stories and opportunities arise. You may be able to repurpose some existing CNT content in writing these articles – see RainReady.org factsheets as examples of the kinds of articles we expect include:

- Getting your yard ready for summer
- Buying a home
- Getting flood insurance

Case study stories of flood victims and community leaders

The consultant will interview and write up 12 case study stories of homeowners, businesses or community leaders affected by flooding – those directly affected or indirectly (e.g. the latter may include insurance representatives). Each case study will be approximately 500-1,000 words long. You will visit them in order to conduct the interview and take a photograph of them.

Please see examples <https://m.facebook.com/notes/center-for-neighborhood-technology-cnt/flooding-leads-to-mold-allergies-and-the-need-for-medication/453936514622597>

And also

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/storyline/wp/2014/07/23/attack-of-the-chicago-climate-change-maggots/>

Each case study story should:

- Describe the personal and financial impact of flooding on them and the wider neighborhood
- Describe the frequency of flooding and list items lost or damaged

CNT will be responsible for identifying the people to be interviewed for these case studies but you will be responsible for coordinating the visit.

Media placement

The consultant will pitch stories to local, regional and national press – popular and specialist - using the content written as identified above. Please outline your experiences and track record pitching stories to the media, your contacts, potential opportunities, and how you would charge for this work.

Video maker

The consultant will make a video of work in the south suburbs. The video will be filmed and published in two phases:

1. Depicting the stories of people in the six communities who are affected by flooding. Please see the following link as examples <http://rainready.org/videos-urban-flooding-and-activism>
2. Depicting some of the solutions to these flooding problems such as tree plantings, home upgrades, street improvements, etc.

When preparing your proposal please assume the following:

- A minimum of 6 visits to the communities to film in total over the 12 months
- CNT will provide you with the contacts and filming opportunities, but you will need to schedule the video shoots
- If heavy rain occurs and is likely to trigger flooding, CNT will reach out to you in the hope/expectation that you will be available to go down to the communities to film this flooding at least once during the 12 month period. CNT will give you as much warning as possible before anticipated flooding events.
- The final video will be no longer than five minutes long
- We are interested in considering creative ways of filming and editing for maximum impact

Photographer

The consultant will make a series of photographs of our work in the south suburb communities.

When preparing your budget, please assume the following:

- You will make a between six and ten visits to the communities in order to photograph people and events

- CNT will provide you with the contacts and filming opportunities, but you will need to schedule these opportunities
- We will expect approximately 5-10 high quality photos per visit.
- Please see the following link as illustrative of the kinds of photographic style we are looking for:
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/centerforneighborhoodtechnology/sets/7215764518801178>
- The exact opportunities to be covered will be established by CNT based on discussions with the photographer, and as specific stories and opportunities arise. Examples of the kinds of photographic opportunities we expect to be covered include:
 - Construction of sustainable flood mitigation, such as rain gardens
 - A planned tactical urbanism event in Midlothian
 - Profiles of residents affected by flooding
 - Profiles of community leaders
 - Examples of green and sustainable flood mitigation strategies
 - Flooding events that occur during the 12 months

Some of the opportunities noted above, in particular any flooding event that occurs in the communities, will require you to go down to the communities at short notice. When preparing your proposal please outline how you expect to be able to respond to these requests at short notice.