

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS ALLEGHANY COUNTY, VIRGINIA

General Reassessment of Locally Taxable and Tax Exempt Real Estate

Alleghany County, Virginia, will accept proposals from qualified firms to carry out a general reassessment of locally taxable and tax exempt real estate in Alleghany County. Proposals will be received until 3:00 p.m., Thursday, April 20, 2017. Please submit eight (8) copies, clearly marked "Proposal for Reassessment of Alleghany County" delivered or mailed to arrive by the specified closing time to:

Jonathan A. Lanford, County Administrator
9212 Winterberry Avenue, Suite C
Covington, VA 24426

Proposals by telephone, telegraph, facsimile, or email will not be accepted. Any proposal received after 3:00 p.m. on the date specified, whether by mail or otherwise, will not be accepted.

Nothing herein is intended to exclude any responsible firm or in any way restrain or restrict competition. On the contrary, all responsible firms, including small, women, and minority-owned businesses, are hereby invited and encouraged to submit proposals.

Selection will be carried out by competitive negotiation as outlined in the *Virginia Public Procurement Act*.

Alleghany County reserves the right to reject any or all proposals submitted.

A complete copy of the Request for Proposals may be requested by calling Mr. Jonathan A. Lanford, County Administrator, at (540) 863-6600 or from the County's website at www.co.alleghany.va.us.

Questions associated with this Request for Proposals should be directed to Mr. Jonathan A. Lanford, County Administrator, at (540) 863-6600 or Mrs. Valerie Bruffey, Commissioner of the Revenue, at (540) 863-6640.

GENERAL REASSESSMENT OF REAL ESTATE

The County of Alleghany, Virginia, is soliciting proposals from qualified contractors to perform a general reassessment of real estate.

Proposal Contents

The respondent's proposal for professional services must include the following:

1. Biographical sketch and qualifications of members of the firm who will be performing work. This should include, without limitation, years of experience, state certifications, academic credentials, and ongoing appraiser certification courses taken. Team leads must be Virginia-certified real estate appraisers. Family relationship of principals in the proposer's firm to any employee of the County of Alleghany, and name and address of both principal and County employee.
2. Names and qualifications of any subcontractors which will be used in this project.
3. A description of any similar projects in which the firm has participated during the past five (5) years giving the involvement of the firm in the project, and the names and phone numbers of references who may be contacted.
4. A complete list of all Virginia locality reassessments completed within the past five (5) years, together with the assessment ratio, as determined by the Virginia Department of Taxation, as of the effective date of the reassessment. **This information must not be omitted from your submission.**
5. Time table for completion of the scope of services.
6. Name, address, and telephone number of contact person and proposed project lead.
7. Proposed method of carrying out assignment, e.g., CAMA system, system type, method of compiling assessment data, etc. This should include a certification that the assessment will be carried out in accordance with the standards of the International Association of Assessing Officers (IAAO) and other provisions of Virginia law and valuation practice.
8. Any supporting information felt by the proposer to be applicable.
9. Cost per parcel (non-binding estimate).
10. Total estimated cost (non-binding estimate).

Qualifications Evaluation

Evaluation of qualifications will be based on the following criteria:

1. Qualifications and experience of personnel involved in project.
2. Ability of the firm to be responsive to requests for service in-person in Alleghany County.
3. Previous work experience with Alleghany County.
4. Experience of firm in similar projects.
5. A working knowledge of the County's assessment software program (CAMRA).

All proposers shall carefully review the following requirements and take these into full consideration when preparing their proposal:

Background Information

Alleghany County, Virginia, will undertake the general reassessment of all real estate situated in the County beginning no later than July 1, 2017 with the reassessment effective date of January 1, 2019. The County will seek to contract with a qualified real estate appraisal firm to perform this work. Proposals will be accepted in accordance with the information contained in this document.

Alleghany County contains approximately 448 square miles and includes one independent city (Covington) and two towns (Clifton Forge and Iron Gate). The County has a population of 16,250 and approximately 16,400 real estate parcels and 600 mobile homes. Approximately 20 permits are issued for new buildings in Alleghany County per year. The County is located in western Virginia, along Interstate 64. Its last general reassessment was conducted by Wampler-Eanes Appraisal Group effective 2013.

Procedure to be Followed in Selection of Appraisal Firm and Supervision of Work

Proposers are asked to submit written proposals which present their qualifications, understanding of the work to be performed, and proposed manner of performance. The County reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, or to contact any or all vendors prior to contract award for clarification or definition. The County does not discriminate against any vendors on any basis and encourages small, women, and minority-owned firms to submit proposals. Based upon the proposals and the factors in this RFP, selection will then be made of two or more offerors who appear, based on the proposals, to be fully qualified and best suited among those submitting qualifications. Discussions shall then be conducted with the apparently qualified offerors in which they

shall be encouraged to elaborate on their qualifications and expertise pertinent to the proposed project. Estimates of price and total project costs may be discussed at this point. At the conclusion of discussions outlined hereinabove, on the basis of evaluation factors published in the RFP and all information developed in the selection process to that point, the County will select in order of preference two or more offerors whose professional qualifications and proposed services are determined, in the County's sole discretion, to provide the overall combination of quality, price, and various elements of required services that in total are optimal relative to the County's needs. Should the County determine in writing and in its sole discretion that only one offeror is fully qualified, or that one offeror is clearly more highly qualified and suitable than the others under consideration, a contract may be negotiated and awarded to that offeror.

Quarterly reports to the Board of Supervisors will be required to ensure that the general reassessment is progressing satisfactorily.

SCOPE OF WORK

Reassessment

The successful firm shall be certified as qualified by the Department of Taxation in order to be appointed by the Alleghany County Board of Supervisors to perform the reassessment. In all cases, uniformity and equity are required under the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia with respect to each class of property. All aspects of this reassessment program shall be conducted in accordance with the standards of the International Association of Assessing Officers (IAAO) and other provisions of law in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The firm shall make a complete, uniform reassessment of the fair market value of all real property within the County (excluding public service properties) and including the inventory and valuation of all non-taxable (exempt) properties and the classification of all real property in accordance with state requirements.

The value to be estimated in all cases shall be 100 percent of fair market value as required by the Virginia Constitution and the Code of Virginia. Generally, the Courts of Virginia have defined fair market value as follows:

Fair market value is the price property will bring when offered for sale by a seller who desires but is not obliged to sell and bought by a buyer under no necessity of purchasing.¹

The valuation process of the reassessment portion of the program must begin on or about July 1, 2017 and be completed by December 31, 2018.

¹ *Board of Supervisors v. Donatelli & Klein, Inc.*, 228 Va. 620, 628 (1985).

Comprehensive Sales Data Analysis of Land and Improvements

The successful firm will propose to perform a comprehensive sales data analysis prior to the appraisal of any real property in the County. This analysis will contain a sufficient number of valid real estate sales and/or transactions from the various classes of real estate within the County. Information customarily included in real estate assessment cards regarding these sales transactions will be recorded in a format agreed upon by the firm and the Commissioner of the Revenue.

This analysis shall become the property of the County at the completion of said program.

Other Analytical Tools

The successful firm will also show a familiarity with the cost and income capitalization approaches to real estate valuation. This should include knowledge and familiarity with actual construction costs prevailing in Allegheny County and surrounding areas. The successful proposer will also have access to regional and national data in order to make accurate comparisons, if necessary, between complex or unusual properties across the region and the ability to analyze financial documents and develop credible income approaches to valuation.

Synopsis of Analysis and Conclusions Report

A report shall be presented to the County Administrator at the completion of the analysis process to include at least the following:

Sales Analysis Report (land and improvements)

Record Cards

Computerized record cards should be used. The design of these cards should include items of information in connection with zoning, the construction, age, size, condition, depreciation, outline sketch of all major building improvements, and pricing data for each building together with the owner's name, address, legal description, map number, etc. Additionally, this card should include an area recording total land and building values, and digital photographs. Ideally, these cards or the data included in them should be easily uploaded for use in an electronic real-estate tax record access system connected with County GIS and accessible to the public.

Personnel

The firm must employ and supervise competent employees of good character and use an adequate number in order to expeditiously perform the work. All employees must have sufficient maturity, skill, and expertise to perform properly the work assigned to them. Employees executing appraisals and other skilled work assigned to them so as

to perform properly and satisfactorily in the manner prescribed in the contract and should have all required professional certifications required for their work. Upon request, any employee shall provide, through the firm, satisfactory proof in affidavit form as to his appraisal or other experience in his particular field. Complete instruction and direction of all personnel connected with the reassessment program must be supplied by the firm.

The County reserves the right to reject individuals on the list of team members for the project. The County may require the firm to remove from the project any person the County may consider, in its sole judgment, to be unqualified or negligent in the performance of his duties, or who is guilty of misconduct. The firm must make available qualified personnel to interact with the Commissioner of the Revenue and her staff in the methods and procedures used during the course of the reassessment program.

The selected firm will be responsible for ensuring that all of its employees used in this reassessment are professional and courteous when dealing with County citizens and staff.

Field Listing and Appraisal of Residential Properties

The firm will be responsible for making a complete exterior inspection that must include measuring and sketching each residence and other major real estate improvement. The type of construction shall be recorded by component parts, such as foundations, basement area, wall construction, insulation, roof, floors, interior finish, heating system, fireplaces, plumbing fixtures, number of rooms, number of bedrooms, number of baths, year built (if attainable), year remodeled, exterior and interior condition, rent (if applicable), and recent sales data. Public water and sewer or private well and septic systems should be noted for each dwelling with associated value. All information so gathered shall be recorded on the fieldwork cards and entered or edited within the County's assessment software program. The firm will be responsible for verification/integrity of all data entered.

Suburban and farm dwellings should be visited and inspected in the same manner as other residential buildings. All other farm buildings and structures should be measured, spotted, and numbered in relation to the main dwelling on the fieldwork card sketch and listed according to their use, type of constructions, size, age, and condition. These improvements shall be appraised at their fair market value.

Field Listing and Appraisal of Commercial Properties

Information concerning commercial properties shall be handled in the same complete manner as residential properties. Buildings shall be accurately measured and a complete description shown for each. The basic cost data shall be applied to existing construction for the determination of accurate and consistent replacement costs, less any physical depreciation, functional, or economic obsolescence. In addition, income

and expense data and market data will be used where applicable in assessing income-producing properties.

All apartments of two or more dwelling units designed or redesigned for such occupancy, and all groups of apartment buildings are to be classified as apartment properties. The appraisal of apartments is to be complete with analysis of income and expense data, if obtainable.

Field Listing and Appraisal of Industrial Properties

Small industrial plants should be appraised in the same manner as other commercial properties. For the more complex industrial properties considered to be major industrial complexes, a complete, separate report, summarized, typed, and bound shall be furnished. This report and data entry shall include a building-by-building component part description of construction and fixed equipment taxable as real estate, showing individual replacement value and depreciation for each. All yard improvements should be listed individually and priced and depreciated separately. Drawings of all buildings shall be made with buildings numbered and shown in their proper location and size with the name of the building as known to the industry shown. The market and income approaches to value shall be used, if possible.

Appraisal of Mobile Homes

The successful firm shall appraise all mobile homes and attachments situated within the County in accordance with Section 58.1-3522 of the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended. Said appraisal shall include mobile homes assessed as personal property, including those located within mobile home parks. The successful firm shall include the appraisal of all mobile homes within the price per parcel bid or identify a separate price per mobile home.

Digital Photographs

The successful firm should include with the data for each improved parcel of land digital photography of all major improvements to the parcel. This photography should include, at a minimum, and if possible, a front photo and a rear photo of each structure.

Appraisal of Other Property

All other real property not covered previously and required by law to be appraised by the County will be appraised at fair market value using acceptable appraisal standards. Sound value method (or flat) shall only be used on property with a value less than \$5,000 for dwellings and \$500 for outbuildings.

New Construction

The appraisal firm shall coordinate its efforts with the County in appraising new construction and additions. Every reasonable effort will be made to ensure that this function is not duplicated by the firm or by the County, or omitted by both. The firm shall be responsible for appraising all new construction and additions through December 31, 2018. New construction will be flagged on the appraisal card and the County's assessment software program and should be closely coordinated with the Commissioner of the Revenue.

Informal Public Hearings

Alleghany County will not use a Board of Assessors. The appraisal firm will designate and provide an employee acceptable to the County to serve in the capacity of professional assessor under the State Code, who will also be acceptable to and approved by the Virginia Department of Taxation.

Prior to the informal public hearings, reassessment notices will be prepared by the firm and mailed by the County to all real property owners as notification of changes in assessed values. The informal public hearings will be conducted by qualified firm representatives in a mutually agreed upon place furnished by the County. The County will cooperate by giving public notification of these meetings after being provided with the necessary information by the firm.

The firm supervisor in charge of this project and sufficient other qualified personnel satisfactory to the County shall be assigned to explain, discuss, and hear all complaints concerning values established. Firm employees shall immediately make any necessary field reviews of all properties of disputed value. They shall also be expected to substantiate the assessed value in question and the methods employed in the reappraisal as a whole. Additionally, they shall furnish recommendations for the disposition of any such complaints.

Board of Equalization Hearings and Court Appeals

Following the general reassessment, the County of Alleghany is required by law to have a Board of Equalization. The Board of Supervisors will establish a schedule and the Board of Equalization will set meeting dates, times, and places to receive complaints from property owners regarding appraised values. It is anticipated these hearings will be conducted by April 2019.

The firm must furnish competent witnesses and supporting evidence as may be required to defend the valuations of any properties in question before the Board of Equalization.

The firm shall also furnish said witness or witnesses and evidence for all challenges to

the lawfulness and correctness of such assessments.

USE OF RECORDS AND MAPS

All maps, sketches, plats, tax records, data, and information in possession of the County pertaining to properties covered by these specifications will be made available to the firm. This is to include the use of all information currently existing on the County's assessment software program and property record cards. The use of this information should in no way diminish the firm's responsibility to visit each site.

Copies of Allegheny County Tax Maps may be made available at the request of the firm.

DOOR HANGERS

A door hanger, to be used as applicable on all property visited, is to be designed and reproduced (following design approval by the County) at the firm's expense. The firm shall be responsible for copying and completing the form, as well as entering data collected within the County's assessment software program. A door hanger shall be left at any improved property when a personal contact is not made.

PROGRESS/SCHEDULE

Contractor shall meet monthly with County representatives to review progress and shall supply estimates of assessments for property worked to date as requested by the County Administrator.

A time table shall be established for the total project by the contractor and shall be approved by the County.

REQUIREMENTS OF FIRM AND COUNTY

What the Firm Shall Provide:

- a. The firm shall assume all transportation and travel expenses for its employees, as well as providing necessary office equipment and supplies (stationery, reassessment notices and envelopes, reassessment cards, door hangers, etc.).
- b. The firm shall appraise, code, prepare, and enter all data in the County's computerized assessment program for all parcels within the County. A parcel is defined as each line used in the land book. Upon completion of data entry and prior to public hearings, the firm shall prepare a reassessment notice for each parcel. All stuffing of envelopes and sorting of zip codes shall be the firm's responsibility.
- c. The firm shall provide adequate insurance coverage to include automobile, professional liability, comprehensive (or commercial) general liability, worker's

compensation, and unemployment for its employees. Said insurance will be designed to hold Allegheny County, its officers, and/or officials harmless from all claims, demands, suits, actions, recoveries of judgments of every kind and description brought or recovered against the County, etc., by reason of any act of the firm or employees during the execution of the work.

d. The firm shall provide a performance bond in the amount of the contract, which shall be made payable to the County of Allegheny. If the firm will have any subcontractors, it must also provide a payment bond.

e. The firm shall meet with the Board of Equalization, if requested, at no additional charge to explain the reassessment process or any specific question which may arise about the general reassessment.

f. Work format for the firm:

1. The firm shall visit each parcel of land and make a complete physical inspection.
2. On each improved property, the main building and other significant buildings and/or improvements will be measured and sketched if the square footage is a factor in valuation. In addition, other information on the system should be verified and edited or corrected (i.e., public water/sewer, private well/septic, number of rooms, year built, and all other features).
3. The firm will interview the owner of each parcel of property if possible. If no one is there, a doorknob hanger will be left informing the individual(s) of the reassessment and requesting the appropriate information. In the event information on the property is not given, a notation will be made on the field card and the property will be appraised on the best available information. In addition, digital photographs will be taken of all major improvements to each parcel.
4. The firm will keep a record on the work copy of the property card of each visit, the date, time, name of appraiser, and person interviewed. Also, such data shall be entered within the County's assessment software program.

g. The firm shall make personnel available for meetings with civic groups or other interested parties as desired by the Board of Supervisors for the purpose of disseminating general information pertaining to the appraisal process. During the general reassessment, the firm will endeavor to promote good public relations with all taxpayers and the general public.

What the County Shall Provide:

- a. The County shall provide office space, furniture, and telephone service.
- b. The County shall furnish postage for mailing notices and any advertising costs for hearings.
- c. The County shall mail the reassessment notices.
- d. The County Commissioner of the Revenue staff will process transfers and splits throughout the reassessment process. The Commissioner of the Revenue shall coordinate this process with the successful contractor.
- e. The County will provide the firm with building permits to be worked during the general reassessment. The firm shall coordinate this work with the Commissioner of the Revenue to avoid duplication of work.
- f. The County shall provide the firm a listing of the names and addresses of all current property owners and a description of each property as shown in the land book, including acreage and Tax Map Number.

Terms of Payment

Invoices shall be submitted to the County on a monthly basis per the County's accounts payable schedule after the work is begun, based on the percent of parcels appraised less a ten percent (10%) retainage as a performance guarantee. Fifty percent (50%) of the retainage shall be paid upon the successful and timely completion of the general reassessment. The remaining fifty percent (50%) shall be paid at the conclusion of the hearings by the Board of Equalization.

FIRM'S POLICY OF NONDISCRIMINATION

Pursuant to the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, during the performance of any contract awarded, the firm agrees as follows:

The firm will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, religion, color, sex, or national origin, except where religion, sex, or national origin is a bona fide occupational qualification reasonably necessary to the normal operation of the firm. The firm agrees to post in conspicuous places, available to employees and applicants for employment, notices setting forth provisions of this nondiscrimination clause.

The firm, in all solicitations or advertisements for employees placed by or on behalf of the firm, will state that such firm is an equal opportunity employer.

Notices, advertisements, and solicitations placed in accordance with Federal law, rule, or regulation shall be deemed sufficient for the purpose of meeting the requirements of this section.

The firm will include the provisions of the foregoing paragraphs in every subcontract or purchase order of over ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00), so such provisions shall be binding upon each subcontractor and/or vendor.

Additionally, the firm will not discriminate against any employer or applicant on the basis of handicapped status, except where handicapped status is a bona fide occupational qualification reasonably necessary to the normal operation of the firm.

DRUG FREE WORKPLACE

During the performance of this contract, if the contract is over \$10,000 the firm agrees to (i) provide a drug free workplace for the firm's employees; post in conspicuous places, available to employees and applicants for employment, a statement notifying employees that the unlawful manufacture, sale, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance or marijuana is prohibited in the firm's workplace and specifying the actions that will be taken against employees for violations of such prohibition; (ii) state in all solicitations or advertisements for employees placed by or on behalf of the firm that the firm maintains a drug free workplace; and (iii) include the provisions of the foregoing clauses in every subcontract or purchase order of over \$10,000 so that the provisions will be binding upon each subcontractor or vendor.