

Request for Qualifications



City of Minneapolis Neighborhood Safety Department

Project SAFE (Safe, Alive, and Free)

RFQ2026-72 / Event #0000004292

Issue Date: September 9, 2026

Proposals Due by: October 13, 2026 at 12:00 pm (Minneapolis Time)

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Request for Qualifications
Project SAFE (Safe, Alive and Free)

- I. INVITATION:** The City of Minneapolis Neighborhood Safety Department (“NSD” or “City”) is issuing this Request for Qualifications (“RFQ”) as the first stage of a two-stage competitive procurement process for Project SAFE (Safe, Alive and Free). The purpose of this RFQ is to identify organizations that possess the minimum organizational experience, capacity, governmental contracting experience, financial systems, and other qualifications necessary to successfully provide intensive outreach, case management, resource navigation, crisis response, and related services to youth and adults at highest risk of involvement in gun violence. This RFQ is a pass/fail qualification process and does not require a detailed technical proposal or cost proposal. Responders that satisfy all minimum qualifications and are formally notified by the City that they have passed this RFQ will be eligible to participate in the subsequent Request for Proposals (“RFP”) process. The subsequent RFP will evaluate qualified Responders on their proposed approach, staffing, organizational capacity, service-delivery model, budget, and other criteria identified by the City. **Passing this RFQ does not guarantee an award or contract with the City.**
- II. ELIGIBILITY:** This RFQ is open to all Responders that meet the minimum qualifications identified in Attachment B Qualifications Pass/Fail Checklist. Responders must demonstrate that they meet all minimum qualifications and provide the required supporting documentation as part of their RFQ response.
- III. PRE-SUBMITTAL CONFERENCE CALL:** The City will conduct a virtual pre-submittal conference for organizations considering responding to this RFQ. Participation is strongly encouraged but is not required to submit a response. The conference is intended to provide potential Responders with a high-level overview of Project SAFE, the anticipated scope of services, minimum qualifications, the two-stage procurement process, and the City's expectations for organizations that advance to the RFP stage. The pre-submittal conference will be the only opportunity for potential Responders to engage directly with City staff regarding this solicitation. Following the conference, City staff will not engage in individual meetings, telephone conversations, informal discussions, or one-on-one communications regarding the substance of the RFQ or anticipated RFP. Questions following the conference must be submitted in writing to the designated procurement contact during the established question-and-answer period. Official City responses will be issued in writing through an addendum and made available to all potential Responders. The conference presentation and any resulting written clarification may be incorporated into the solicitation record through an addendum.
- The pre-submittal virtual meeting will be held on **Monday, September 14, 2026 at 1:00 p.m.** for potential Responders. To access the meeting, [you can use this](#) link. You can also call into the meeting (audio only) at 612-276-6670, conference ID number: 764692336# . The City encourages you to join a few minutes early to ensure you are connected on time.
- IV. RESPONSE SUBMITTAL:** All responses must be submitted electronically through the eSupplier Portal. If you are already a City Supplier, you should have received an email containing your eSupplier User ID and Password. If you do not remember your password, click on the “Forgot Password” tile to enter your User ID and a new password will be emailed to you. If you are not already a city supplier, click on the eSupplier link below and then click on the “Bidder/Payee Registration” tile to register. If you need further assistance with eSupplier, please send an email to eprocurement@minneapolismn.gov

eSupplier Portal – Electronic Response Submission
<https://comet-fs.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/psc/supplier>

- **Submit All Documents as ONE PDF to the E-supplier System**
- **Late Responses or responses submitted via email/mail/in person Will Not Be Accepted.**

V. RESPONSE FORMAT/APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS:

Responders must submit a complete response demonstrating that the organization meets each minimum qualification identified in Attachment B: Qualification Response Requirements. This RFQ is the first stage of a two-stage procurement process and will be evaluated on a Pass/Fail basis to determine which Responders are eligible to advance to the subsequent Request for Proposals (RFP). Responders must receive a “Pass” for all required qualifications. Responses must follow the numerical order in Attachment B, clearly identify each qualification addressed, and include sufficient supporting documentation for the City to independently verify compliance. Detailed technical proposals, work plans, staffing proposals, and cost proposals should not be submitted unless specifically required to support a minimum qualification; these materials will be requested during the RFP stage. Failure to demonstrate compliance with any required qualification may result in disqualification from further consideration. Qualification through this RFQ only permits a Responder to advance to the RFP stage and does not constitute an award or obligate the City to enter into a contract.

Rights Reserved

The City reserves the right to:

- Waive or permit correction of minor informalities, irregularities, or inconsistencies in RFQ responses, to the extent permitted by applicable procurement requirements;
- Reject any or all RFQ responses received;
- Consider documented past performance resulting from current or prior City contracts where relevant to determining whether a minimum qualification has been satisfied;
- Request clarification or additional information necessary to verify information submitted in an RFQ response, provided such clarification does not materially alter the response or establish a qualification that was not demonstrated by the submission deadline;
- Contact references or other identified entities to verify a Responder’s qualifications, experience, or representations;
- Independently verify documentation or information submitted by a Responder, including organizational status, debarment status, governmental contracting experience, insurance-related representations, and other minimum qualification requirements; and
- Determine, based on the RFQ response and required supporting documentation, whether a Responder has satisfied each minimum qualification and is eligible to advance to the subsequent RFP stage.

VI. SCHEDULE: The following is a listing of key response and project milestones:

Procurement Activity	Estimated Date
RFQ Released	September 9, 2026
Pre-Qualification Conference	1:00 p.m. on September 14, 2026
RFQ Questions Due	4:00 p.m. on September 18, 2026
Responses to RFQ Questions Posted	By 4:00 p.m. on September 23, 2026
RFQ Responses Due	12:00 p.m. on October 13, 2026
Notice of Qualification / Eligibility to Advance to RFP	November 2, 2026

VII. DEPARTMENT CONTACT/REQUESTS FOR CLARIFICATION: The Responder’s primary interface with the City will be with the Contract Manager who will act as the City’s designated

representative for the Project. Prospective Responders may direct inquiries/questions via email to:

Neighborhood Safety Department: NeighborhoodSafety@minneapolismn.gov
Subject Line: Project SAFE (Safe, Alive and Free) Request for Qualifications
Question(s)

The City reserves the right not to respond to questions or to rephrase questions. Any responses to the questions will be posted to the current event in the eSupplier Portal – Contracting Opportunities via an addendum.

VIII. ADDENDUM TO THE RFQ: If any addendum is issued for the RFQ, it will be posted as an attachment to the current event. The City reserves the right to cancel or amend the RFQ at any time.

IX. DATA PRACTICES: Data you provide in response to this RFQ will be subject to the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act and may be available to the public. Minn. Stat. 13.591 classifies Business Data and subdivision 3 specifically addresses data submitted in response to a Request for Proposal as defined by Minn. Stat. 16C.02. If you are submitting specific data which you believe meets the definition of trade secret data as defined in Minn. Stat. 13.37, please indicate this on the documents containing the data. The City may ask you to establish that the data meets all of the conditions set forth in Minn. Stat. 13.37, subdivision 1(b).

Attachment A: Scope of Services

A. Background

Project SAFE (Safe, Alive and Free) adapts best practices from the National Network for Safe Communities' Group Violence Intervention (GVI) strategy, a partnership-based approach that brings together community, social services and supports, outreach, and law enforcement to reduce group-involved homicide and gun violence. The strategy focuses on directly engaging a small and influential number of individuals and groups who are at the highest risk of involvement in serious violence, either as those causing harm or those most likely to be harmed. Through this Request for Qualifications (RFQ), the City seeks to identify qualified organizations with the experience and organizational capacity necessary to support Project SAFE. Project SAFE serves both youth and adults at highest risk of involvement in gun violence, including group-involved violence, across the City of Minneapolis and its diverse cultural and linguistic communities.

Through this approach, Project SAFE seeks to create accountability, reinforce clear community standards against violence, and provide meaningful pathways away from the cycle of gun violence. A core component of the strategy is connecting participants at highest risk with timely, accessible, and responsive supports that address immediate needs, safety, family circumstances where applicable, and long-term stability.

This RFQ focuses on identifying organizations qualified to support the social services component of Project SAFE. The City recognizes that traditional service models are not always accessible or effective for individuals at highest risk of gun violence due to barriers such as safety concerns, geographic limitations, distrust of systems, urgent basic needs, family circumstances, and complex life experiences. Accordingly, Project SAFE emphasizes services that are flexible, relationship-based, culturally responsive, developmentally appropriate, and capable of meeting participants where they are.

B. Purpose of this RFQ

The purpose of this RFQ is to identify Responders that meet the minimum qualifications to provide Project SAFE support and outreach services. This RFQ is the first stage of a two-stage procurement process. Responders that meet all minimum qualifications will be eligible to advance to the subsequent RFP process. Qualification through this RFQ does not guarantee selection or award of a contract, and the City reserves the right to cancel the RFQ at any time.

C. Anticipated Services

To be successful, Project SAFE will build strong, consistent relationships with individuals at highest risk for gun violence and connect them to supports that increase stability, safety, and opportunities. It will deliver clear messages about accountability while helping participants strengthen protective factors such as employment, education, and meeting basic needs. A successful program reduces participants' involvement in violence, builds community trust, and increases both individual and community perceptions of safety. Over time, these efforts contribute to lower gun violence rates in Minneapolis, stronger community relationships, reduced justice system involvement, and fewer group-involved shootings and homicides. Responders working with referred participants should have a proven track record and relevant training, with experience supporting individuals, families, and communities affected by gun violence. The City follows the best practice of partnering with people who are closest to the issue, as they are often best equipped to help individuals move away from violent lifestyles and reduce their risk of future involvement. This work involves crisis response, intensive case management, safety planning, and field-based outreach rather than traditional office-based social services.

Responders should be able to adapt quickly to changing community needs, street dynamics, and participant circumstances. The City values culturally specific experience and staffing, while also

recognizing the importance of cultural humility and the ability to build authentic relationships with communities outside of a Responder's own background, neighborhood, identity, or lived experience.

Responders must serve both youth and adult participants referred through Project SAFE through differentiated approaches for adults and youth. Proposals should demonstrate the ability to adapt engagement, case management, outreach, and support strategies based on the age, needs, risks, and circumstances of each participant.

Competencies the City will consider include:

- Proven experience working with individuals at highest risk of involvement in gun violence, including individuals who may be actively involved in group, gang, or street dynamics
- Experience providing violence prevention, violence interruption, or community-based public safety services
- Knowledge of existing and past street dynamics, conflicts, and individuals at highest risk of being involved in or impacted by violence
- Experience working with individuals, families, and communities impacted by gun violence
- Experience supporting formerly incarcerated individuals or individuals with past justice-system involvement
- Experience providing intensive case management, crisis response, individualized support planning, and direct connection to appropriate resources
- Capacity to deliver key supports in-house when appropriate, such as behavioral health services, therapy, workforce development, basic needs assistance, or other stabilization supports
- Experience providing high-touch participant engagement with individuals at highest risk, including frequent contact and in-person support
- Ability to assess participant needs and adjust service intensity based on risk, stability, and changing circumstances
- Experience conducting proactive, persistent, and relationship-based outreach with individuals and families who may be difficult to reach, distrustful of systems, or initially unwilling to participate
- Demonstrated ability to build trust and credibility across different communities, neighborhoods, and cultural groups, including communities outside of the Responder's own background or lived experience
- Experience establishing credibility and relationships in areas most impacted by violence, including through community presence, community meetings, events, and engagement in places where group-involved individuals are known to gather
- Demonstrated ability to engage participants who may be disconnected from, distrustful of, or unable to access traditional services
- Experience collaborating with law enforcement, social services, schools, community organizations, and other system partners while maintaining participant trust
- Experience providing on-call or after-hours support in crisis-based or community violence intervention work
- Experience supporting individuals with mental health needs, trauma histories, substance use concerns, or other complex barriers

Responsibilities include:

Engagement and Outreach

- Building trust and maintaining positive, consistent, relationship-based engagement with participants and their families.
- Providing relentless outreach and maintaining around-the-clock availability, including rapid

response during crises, urgent needs, or moments of heightened risk.

- Conducting proactive, persistent outreach through cold calls, home visits, community-based engagement, and repeated follow-up attempts when participants are difficult to reach or initially unwilling to engage.
- Maintaining high levels of participant engagement with multiple weekly touchpoints, including in-person visits when needed.
- Tailoring engagement strategies to each participant's age, needs, risks, family context, and life circumstances.
- Providing outreach and support across the entire City of Minneapolis and adapting engagement strategies to meet the cultural, linguistic, and community-specific needs of diverse neighborhoods.

Presence and Credibility

- Establishing credibility and presence in communities most impacted by violence by attending meetings, visiting community groups, supporting or hosting events, and engaging in areas where group-involved individuals gather.

Case Management and Assessment

- Assessing participant needs and adjusting service intensity over time based on risk, stability, and changing circumstances.
- Assigning participants to priority, active or stabilized tiers based on assessed risk and engagement.
- Maintaining anticipated caseloads and managing time, outreach, and documentation to ensure consistent engagement across all assigned participants.
- Setting goals, creating individualized support plans, and supporting participants in exiting cycles of violence, reducing risk, maintaining safety, and increasing long-term stability.
- Providing crisis response, safety planning, urgent problem-solving, and stabilization support.
- Identifying and facilitating access to community resources to address basic needs such as food, housing, transportation, education, employment, mental health, substance use, and family support.
- Using a case management system to systemically track participant engagement and progress.

Resource Navigation

- Maintaining broad knowledge of community resources and helping participants navigate eligibility, documentation, waitlists, and referral processes.
- Providing warm handoffs rather than simple referrals, including contacting providers, scheduling appointments, accompanying participants, assisting with paperwork, and ensuring successful connection.
- Navigating government systems on behalf of participants to help them access benefits, housing supports, workforce services, education resources, behavioral health care, identification documents, transportation assistance, and other stabilization supports.
- Partnering with community organizations, service providers, and system partners to coordinate case management, in-house supports, warm handoffs, and ongoing engagement.

Differentiated Youth Support

- Incorporating family-centered support for youth participants, including engaging parents, caregivers, family advocates, parent coaches, or other trusted supports.
- Connecting and coordinating with schools, juvenile probation, and other key supports in a youth's network to ensure consistent communication and aligned care.
- Providing or coordinating positive engagement opportunities for youth during high-risk periods

such as school breaks, summer months, and transitions in and out of the school year.

- Offering youth supports that promote self-empowerment, positive identity development, leadership, post-secondary planning, workforce readiness, life skills, and exposure to safe, constructive experiences.

Information Management and Coordination

- Serving as a trusted liaison among participants, families, community members, service providers, law enforcement, and other system partners while maintaining strict confidentiality and discretion.
- Exercising extreme discretion with sensitive information related to participants, families, group dynamics, safety concerns, or system partners.
- Participating in Custom Notifications and Weekly Custom Coordination meetings to review referrals, engagement, safety concerns, service needs, barriers, progress, and next steps.
- Engaging in regular meetings with the Project SAFE team to review cases and provide updates.
- Maintaining accurate, timely documentation of outreach attempts, engagement, services provided, referrals, warm handoffs, safety concerns, and progress toward participant goals.
- Implementing appropriate measures to protect the integrity and confidentiality of participant information and data, in compliance with all relevant laws, regulations, and confidentiality requirements, including those related to juvenile confidentiality. Any breach of confidentiality may lead to disciplinary action, including revocation of access privileges and potential legal consequences.

D. Anticipated Project Budgets and Award

The City intends to award a single contract. The City reserves the right to negotiate with the Responder selected for the contract resulting from the subsequent RFP. These negotiations may address contract budgets, lengths based on needs, and proposed expenditures prior to the project start date. The City retains the authority to reject specific line items and request any additional information necessary for negotiations. If negotiations are unsuccessful, the City reserves the right to rescind the award. Detailed budget discussions will occur with selected Responder during these negotiations, and actual award amounts will be determined at that time.

NOTE: A Notification of Intent to Award Letter does not create a contractual obligation on behalf of the City and does not authorize the commencement of work.

E. Contract Expectations

The Contract holder will deliver GVI support and outreach services. The anticipated scope of work and responsibilities for outreach workers will, at a minimum, include:

- Complete onboarding, orientation, and training in collaboration with the Minneapolis NSD
- Complete a mandatory two-hour training, delivered by NSD, on how to comply with the City's accounting requirements for payments
- Communicate and maintain the position with participants of non-affiliation with the police and other law enforcement. Must be able to articulate and emphasize nonbiased third-party role.
- Operate in alignment with the broader evidence based GVI strategy approach as communicated by the Minneapolis NSD
- Provide or coordinate access to behavioral health services, including therapy, counseling, and other mental health supports, through in-house providers or external referrals as appropriate.
- Have regular contact with active participants, influencers, and individuals at risk.
- Provide outreach across the entire city of Minneapolis and adapt engagement strategies to meet the cultural and language needs of diverse communities.
- Motivate participants to reject violence through strategies like promoting healthy and positive life choice decision-making skills and providing new opportunities and resources for change.

- Convey explicit recognition that leaving the streets is an ongoing process. Provide deliberate, persistent, and consistent outreach to participants involved in group violence to help them foster new relationships with their community.
- Working with community leadership to identify individuals at risk for early prevention and intervention.
- Provide mentorship to help participants transition out of the street life and help remove obstacles that have prohibited participants from receiving help and building legitimate community relationships.
- Connect clients with social and recreational programs that build life and social skills.
- Refer participants to services and resources as needed.
- Follow all program policies and procedures as outlined by the City of Minneapolis.
- Complete all required documentation and reporting of participant activities.
- Track all hours worked.
- Invoice for allowable expenses on a regular basis as outlined in the contract.
- Ensure documentation of any programmatic safety issues impacting contractors or Project SAFE participants.
- Ensure that contractors and team have no pre-existing or existing conflict of interests with the groups they are serving.
- If employing or contracting with additional contractors, provide regular, timely payments to those employees or contractors for all undisputed expenses.
- Maintain anticipated caseloads, ensuring consistent outreach, engagement and documentation for all assigned participants.
- Determine and update participant tier placement (priority, active, and stabilized).
- Ensure programmatic documentation and reporting expectations are met. This will include but is not limited to:
 - Submitting regular progress reports detailing output measures (e.g. number of shifts/hours worked) and narrative summary (e.g. successes and accomplishments, challenges, community feedback, etc.).
 - Submitting financial reports and documentation of expenses (e.g. payroll documentation, expense ledger, etc.).
 - Participating in qualitative interviews with NSD staff about the impact of the work as requested.
 - Allowing NSD staff to shadow contractor as they perform their work as requested for monitoring purposes.
 - Involving NSD in strategic or high-level programmatic decision making.
 - Participating in planning, development, and ongoing progress meetings with NSD and NSD- identified partners.
 - Ensuring that no outreach contractors perform any law enforcement functions or tasks, or possess, carry or use firearms or weapons of any kind while performing services pursuant to the contract.
 - Ensuring that services align with the coordinated Project SAFE approach, including that contracted services are consistent with NSD programmatic guidelines and practices.
 - Accessing NSD-provided training as appropriate to ensure that all services are consistent with Project SAFE strategic outreach approach.

F. Reporting Requirements

Responders must demonstrate the ability to meet the following reporting requirements as a condition of this RFQ. If awarded a contract, the Responder will be required to submit reports throughout the term of the contract and use reporting template(s) provided by the City. Reports are expected to be sent as de-identified summary-level information. Please see the “Reporting Measure Domains” section for an

overview of measures that the awarded Contractor will be expected to report.

Monthly Reports: Responders must be able to submit monthly reports, using the template provided by the City, designed to track program activities, outputs, and outcomes. Monthly reports are due by 11:59 PM Minneapolis time on the 10th day of each month for the respective month. If the 10th falls on a weekend or holiday, the report is due the next business day.

Reporting Measure Domains		
	Measure domain	Description
1	Number of behavioral health services provided	Reporting will include updates on any behavioral health services provided to participants, such as counseling, group therapy, or individual therapy.
2	Number of new participants	Reporting will include total number of new participants, active participants, and cumulative participants to PROJECT SAFE program
3	Number of new participants that have attended a custom notification	Reporting will include the total number of new participants that have attended a custom notification (custom notification does not need to be in the same reporting month)
4	Number of outreach and engagement activities conducted	Reporting will detail the number of participants reached through community engagement efforts, including outreach in schools, neighborhoods, and homes.
5	Number of program intake screenings completed	Reporting will include the number of new participant intake screenings conducted.
6	Number of referrals received to PROJECT SAFE	Reporting will include the number of referrals received from MPD.
7	Total number of youths currently enrolled in PROJECT SAFE services	Reporting will include cumulative number of total participants actively enrolled in PROJECT SAFE services
8	Number of employment, education, or skill building trainings or activities conducted	Reporting will include details of any job skills workshops, job placements, or vocational training provided to participants.
9	Description of program and process barriers	Reporting will include a written description of barriers or challenges faced during programming. This can be feedback from any staff or participant.

Attachment B: Qualification Response Requirements

All items below require documented proof. Responses submitted without the corresponding documentation will be considered incomplete and may result in failing. Responses must be applicable to the Responder and any subcontractors the Responder intends to utilize in performing services.

#	Minimum Qualification	Required Documentation
1	Minimum of 3 years providing direct violence intervention or violence prevention services to justice-impacted or high-risk individuals	Organizational history or narrative describing specific programs and dates of operation, along with supporting documentation (e.g., prior grant awards, contracts, or program reports) demonstrating at least 3 years of continuous service.
2	Minimum of 3 years providing direct services to youth and/or young adults involved in or at risk of group, peer, or gang-related violence	Program description identifying the specific population served and dates of service, supported by contracts, funder reports, referral data, or similar documentation demonstrating at least 3 years of continuous service to this population.
3	Direct experience implementing, or demonstrated understanding of, Group Violence Intervention (GVI) or other focused deterrence approaches involving collaboration among law enforcement, community members, and service providers	Narrative describing GVI or focused deterrence experience, including specific partners and the organization's role, supported by documentation such as MOUs, letters of collaboration, or prior contract scopes evidencing this work.
4	Demonstrated experience successfully administering professional services contracts for a Local, State, or Federal government entity	Copy of at least one prior government contract (Local, State, or Federal), or a reference letter/contact from the contracting government entity confirming successful contract performance.
5	Currently registered and in good standing to do business in the State of Minnesota	Current Certificate of Good Standing or equivalent registration confirmation issued by the Minnesota Secretary of State.
6	Not listed on the Minnesota state debarment list or the federal SAM exclusion list (suggest adding links for both sites here)	Screenshot or printout of search results from both the Minnesota debarment list and SAM.gov exclusion list, dated at or near the time of response submission.
7	No City of Minneapolis contracts terminated for default within the last five (5) years, and no other Citywide determination precluding the vendor from doing business with the City	Signed certification attesting to compliance. The City reserves the right to independently verify this information against its internal records.
8	Written acknowledgement of the requirement to obtain and maintain general liability, professional liability, and any other insurance required under the contract	Signed written acknowledgement or certification. A current Certificate of Insurance may also be provided if coverage is already in place.
9	Written acknowledgement that the contractor will comply with required background checks and/or youth safety screening requirements for all personnel	Signed written acknowledgement or certification.

	working directly with participants, including minors	
10	Demonstrated ability to comply with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP)	Description of the organization's accounting system or software, together with the most recent independent audit, financial review, or a letter from a CPA or accountant confirming GAAP-compliant accounting practices.