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## **Request for Qualifications for Accessibility and Affordability of Early Care and Education Study**

**Due:** August 13, 2017

### **Background**

Since its founding in 2004, the Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County (ECPAC) has worked to build an impressive network of partners into a strong, coordinated early childhood system serving Adams County. ECPAC is one of 31 “Councils” created through legislation in 2007, to improve and sustain the availability, capacity, accessibility, and quality of early childhood services in the areas of Early Learning, Health, Social-Emotional-Mental Health, and Family Support and Parent Education. Over the past 11 years, ECPAC has developed an effective, independent organization that nurtures and maintains a network of partners, leads collective direction-setting and strategic planning efforts, and secures the partner and financial resources needed to take action on shared strategic goals. The ECPAC partnership includes over 45 organizations with over 75 individuals including partner staff, family partners, elected officials, and other stakeholders. ECPAC’s task is to convene these partners to maximize the positive impact of systems that serve young children and families during the critical early childhood years, thereby increasing child school readiness, well-being and success.

### **Introduction**

Families rely on child care to enable them to work or go to school towards a higher income to provide for their family and to provide the early care and education experiences needed to prepare their children for school. While research has proven high quality child care drastically improves a child’s odds of being successful in school and beyond, the high cost of child care puts quality care and early education out of reach for many families, particularly low-income families. In Adams County, it is estimated that 80% of children have never attended any formal child care or preschool prior to entering kindergarten. Often these children are cared for at home by a parent, family member, friend, or a neighbor. Additionally, the most recent data suggests that Adams County has only 11,100 child care slots for the 28,778 of children (65.3%) under the age of 6 who had all working parents in the labor force. Therefore over 38% of children must be being cared for by an informal caregiver other than a parent

Access and affordability of high quality early care and education is both a national and locally recognized need. An FFN feasibility study was conducted from 2015-2016 in partnership with Westminster Public Schools and the Colorado Statewide Parent Coalition (funded by Piton-Gary Community Investments). Just over 70 people (English and Spanish speaking) participated in focus groups and over 200 people completed a survey – both asking about needs regarding FFN care. In this study, 43% it was indicated that the biggest reason families choose or provide FFN care is due to the cost of formal care (43%). Of participants, 52% noted that their family cares for their child(ren) while they work, 10% are cared for by a friend, and 4% by a neighbor, while only 4% use a formal child care center.

In 2013, families of children entering kindergarten in Westminster Public Schools completed a survey and 29.3% (roughly 200 children) indicated that they wanted their child to attend preschool but were unable to due to: 1) transportation (36.8%); 2) parent work schedule (31.6%); 3) cost (10.5%); 4) not available in area (10.5%); 5) Other (10.5%). Therefore, we know both that FFN plays an important role in the care of a large number of young children in this area, and that we have a responsibility to help create solutions to the identified barriers to accessing high quality and affordable care.

At the same time, Adams County Human Services Department has continually not utilized the allotted Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP) funding that is available to qualifying families. ECPAC has worked closely with the CCCAP program to consider reasons and strategies, with some improvements but additional work to be done. Having the opportunity to dive deeper into the access and affordability issues facing our community will lead to more strategic and successful outcomes.



**Scope of Work:**

This is an anticipated 13-month project. The scope of work for this contract will be agreed upon and finalized with the consultant – once determined and prior to contracting. However, in general it is expected that the consultant will complete:

Activities	Deliverables	Timeline
<p>For Entire Project (as needed): Work closely with SHIFT: <a href="http://www.garycommunity.org/welcome-shift-research-lab">http://www.garycommunity.org/welcome-shift-research-lab</a></p>		
<p><u>Goal Setting and Stakeholder Conversations (Months 1-3)</u> * Discussions with stakeholders to review research questions, identify key sources of data, and ensure that project goals align with needs of the client and stakeholders.  As group – review DPP Access and Capacity Study, the Early Milestones Economic Impact Study, CU Market Rate Report, and the Civic Canopy CCCAP Stakeholder Report</p>	<p>Key partners are aware of current data and identify additional needs: * What is the current need for ECE in Adams County? In what areas of the county is the greatest need? * What provision currently exists for ECE? How is it distributed geographically around the county? Where is there the most unmet need for access? * What is the distribution of quality in the county? Are patterns of access to quality different for different children or in different areas of the county? * What are patterns of use and eligibility for CCCAP across the county? * What is the cost of unmet need?</p>	<p>Sept – Nov 2017</p>
<p><u>Data Collection (Months 4-7)</u> * Create data map identifying key data sources and contacts * Collect data including CCCAP funding patterns; market rates; licensed providers, capacity, and quality rating levels; and child demographics, including age, neighborhood, and income</p>	<p>Additional data points exist either within or in conjunction with on-line mapping tool</p>	<p>Dec 2017 – June 2018</p>
<p><u>Analysis (Months 7-10)</u> The analysis plan will include: * Determine patterns of ECE access and need throughout the county including but not limited to: - Identify areas lacking formal ECE - Identify areas lacking affordable formal care * Determine unmet need for quality ECE in the county * Determine patterns of CCCAP use and unmet need for CCCAP * Mapping of need throughout the county using GIS software</p>		<p>June – Aug 2018</p>
<p><u>Reporting (Months 10-12)</u> The reporting stage will involve creating draft and final versions of deliverables.</p>	<p>Deliverables will include: * Final report documenting methodology, findings, and maps * Create dashboard to track current state and future progress (could include: Interactive Excel model) * Executive summary * Powerpoint deck</p>	<p>Aug – Sept 2018</p>
<p><u>Support Development of Action Plan (months 12-13):</u> * Data is used to create strategies to fill gaps regarding improved access and affordability of high quality formal early care and education;</p>	<p>Action Plan exists with short and long-term strategies</p>	<p>Sept – Oct 2018</p>



### **Project Timeline**

Request for proposals issued: July 18, 2017

Proposals due: August 13, 2017

Consultant selected: by August 18, 2017 (phone interviews conducted August 17-18 as needed)

Scope of Work plan, with timelines finalized with consultant: by Aug 25, 2017 with work to begin once contract is signed.

### **To be included in proposal:**

#### **Qualifications of applicant**

1. Name of individual/firm and all contact information
  - a. The full name, address of the individual/organization, and the number of years the individual/organization has been performing work similar to that which is described here
2. Qualifications to undertake this project, including specific knowledge and strengths in the following areas (if you are a firm, include the qualifications of both the firm and personnel who will work on this project)
  - a. Experience in the above-mentioned data and evaluation activities and deliverables
  - b. Experience facilitating discussions with key stakeholders with various viewpoints and presenting data in an understandable and usable manner
  - c. Other relevant experience
3. Allocated cost and timeline for each goal including planned activities in achieving the goals of the project - to serve as submitted budget (not included in page limit)
4. 2-3 References from clients who have contracted for similar services and an example of previous sustainability planning work (not included in page limit)

### **Budget: 35,000**

The budget for this engagement is \$35,000 to include all:

- Planning, activities, and deliverables;
- Supplies and materials related to activities

### **Proposal Format**

All submissions must be electronic in Microsoft Word or pdf format and should not exceed 5 pages.

**Submit proposal via e-mail to:** [lisa@ecpac.org](mailto:lisa@ecpac.org)

**Submission Deadline:** August 13, 2017

**Contact: Lisa Jansen Thompson:** 303-428-2029 or [lisa@ecpac.org](mailto:lisa@ecpac.org)