



STATE OF ARKANSAS
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
501 Woodlane St., Ste. 401N
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201-1023

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION
SOLICITATION DOCUMENT

SOLICITATION INFORMATION			
Solicitation Number:	ADVA-22-1001R2	Solicitation Issued:	October 25, 2021
Description:	Site Selection for the Replacement of the Arkansas State Veterans Home located in Fayetteville		
Department:	Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs		

SUBMISSION DEADLINE			
Response Opening Date:	December 15, 2021	Response Opening Time:	1:00 p.m., Central Time
Deliver response submissions for this Request for Information to the Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs on or before the submission deadline. Responses received after the submission deadline may be rejected as untimely.			

DELIVERY OF RESPONSE DOCUMENTS	
Delivery Address:	Department of Veterans Affairs 501 Woodlane St., Ste. 401N Little Rock, Arkansas 72201-1023 Delivery providers, USPS, UPS, and FedEx deliver mail to ADVA's street address on a schedule determined by each individual provider. These providers will deliver to ADVA based solely on the street address. Prospective Offeror assume all risk for timely, properly submitted deliveries.
Response's Outer Packaging:	Seal outer packaging and properly mark with the following information. If outer packaging of response submission is not properly marked, the package may be opened for response identification purposes. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Solicitation number• Date and time of response opening• Prospective Offeror's name and return address

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFIARS CONTACT INFORMATION			
ADVA Buyer:	Barry Goldman	Buyer's Direct Phone Number:	501-682-1954
Email Address:	Barry.goldman@arkansas.gov	ADVA Main Number:	501-683-2382
ADVA Website:	https://www.veterans.arkansas.gov		

SECTION 1 - GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS AND INFORMATION

- **Do not provide responses to items in this section unless specifically and expressly required.**

1.1 PURPOSE

The Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs (ADVA) issues this Request for Information (RFI) to obtain responses and to select the most advantageous location for the replacement Arkansas State Veterans Home currently located in Fayetteville, Arkansas. Comments, or concerns regarding this solicitation should be addressed to the Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs.

Currently, ADVA operates two (2) skilled nursing facilities within the State of Arkansas. The Arkansas State Veterans Home located in Fayetteville (ASVH-F or Facility) has been at its current location since 2000. The Facility currently occupies 46,314 sqft in the old Mercy Hospital Building in Fayetteville, with two (2) floors having been renovated as living space for the residents, and separate locations within the existing complex for warehousing and food preparation. Obligations to remain on the premises due to Federal Funds provided for the renovation of space and the creation of administration space are set to expire in 2025. This provides ADVA with a unique opportunity to explore more advantageous locations to build a replacement home.

The United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) offers the State Veterans Home Construction Grant Program in an effort to assist states in building nursing care facilities. The VA will provide federal funding to either construct or acquire new facilities or to renovate existing ones by contributing up to sixty-five percent (65%) of the total construction cost. The State is responsible to match funds for the remaining thirty-five percent (35%). Federal regulations require that the land the facility is built on be supplied by non-federal entity.

A potential replacement Facility should be located where a concentration of veterans age sixty-five (65) and older reside.

In preparation for this process, ADVA contracted to have an Independent Needs Assessment for Replacement Facility to identify the needs and provide a data driven approach to replacing the existing Facility, See Attachment 1. The report includes, but is not limited to; demographics, general requirements for the grant program, and location factors.

ADVA is seeking to partner with public or private entity(ies) to identify the most advantageous proposal for the location and operation of a new facility.

1.2 SOLICITATION SCHEDULE

- A. For informational purposes, ADVA is providing a Solicitation Schedule; however, dates listed and noted with an asterisk (*) are anticipated dates only and are subject to change at the discretion of the State.

TABLE A: TENTATIVE SOLICITATION SCHEDULE

ACTIVITY	DATE
RFI Release to Prospective Offeror(s)	October 25, 2021
Deadline for Prospective Offeror(s) Questions	November 26, 2021 2:00 PM CST
Answers to Questions Posted to website(s)*	November 12, 2021
Response Due Date	December 15, 2021 1:00 PM CST
Oral Presentations/Demonstrations*	TBD

1.3 CLARIFICATION OF SOLICITATION

- A. Submit any questions requesting clarification of information contained in this *Solicitation* in writing

via email by 2:00 p.m., Central Time on or before November 26, 2021 to the ADVA buyer as shown on page one (1) of this *Solicitation*.

- For each question submitted, the Prospective Offeror should reference the specific solicitation item number to which the question refers.
 - Prospective Offeror(s) written questions will be consolidated and responded to by the State as deemed appropriate. The State's consolidated written response is anticipated to be posted to the ADVA, TSS DBA and TSS OSP websites by the close of business on date **within 72 hours of response due date**. If Prospective Offeror's questions are unclear or non-substantive in nature, the State may request clarification of a question(s) or decline to answer.
- B. The Prospective Offeror should notify the ADVA buyer of any term, condition, etc., that precludes the Prospective Offeror(s) from providing a compliant, responsive submission. Prospective Offeror should note that it is the responsibility of the Prospective Offeror's to seek resolution of all such issues, including those relating to the terms and conditions of the contract, prior to the submission of a response.
- C. Prospective Offeror's may contact ADVA with non-substantive questions at any time prior to the response opening.
- D. An oral statement by ADVA will not be part of any contract resulting from this solicitation and may not reasonably be relied on by any Prospective Offeror's as an aid to interpretation unless it is reduced to writing and expressly adopted by ADVA.

1.4 DEFINITION OF TERMS

- A. Unless otherwise defined herein, all terms defined in Arkansas Procurement herein have the same meaning herein.
- B. "Prospective Offeror's" means a responsible Offeror who submits a response to this solicitation.
- C. The terms "Request for Information", "RFI," and "Solicitation" are used synonymously in this document.
- D. "Responsive Submission" means a submission in response to this solicitation that conforms in all material respects to this RFI.
- E. "Shall" and "Must" mean the imperative and are used to identify requirements.
- F. "Requirement" means something required.
- G. "Specification" means any technical or purchase description or other description of the physical or functional characteristics, or of the nature, of a commodity or service. "Specification" may include a description of any requirement for inspecting, testing, or preparing a commodity or service for delivery.
- H. "State" means the State of Arkansas. When the term "State" is used herein to reference any obligation of the State under a contract that results from this solicitation, that obligation is limited to the Department using such a contract.

1.5 PRICING

Considering all the relevant factors in operating the Facility, ADVA seeks the proposal that provides minimal investment, therefore donated properties are preferable. However, ADVA seeks all proposals and may take appraisal values into consideration during the Evaluation process. Proposals **shall not** include any pricing in their response. Appraisal values, among other factors, will be considered during negotiations of any property in compliance with ABA-Purchase Land Procedures dated

7/24/19.

1.6 RESPONSE DOCUMENTS

A. *Original Response Packet*

1. Responses within the *Information for Evaluation* and *Exceptions* sections **must not** contain the Prospective Offeror(s) name or any other identifiers, including without limitation names of staff members, projects, products, and addresses.
2. Prospective Offeror(s) **shall** utilize the *Response Packet* to submit their responses.
3. The following items are Response Submission Requirements and **must** be submitted in the original *Response Packet*.
 - a. Original signed *Response Signature Page*. Signature may be ink or digital. (See *Response Packet*.)
 - b. One (1) original hard copy of the response to the *Information for Evaluation* section included in the *Response Packet*. Response **must** be in the English language.
 - c. *Exceptions Form*.
4. **DO NOT** include any other documents or ancillary information, such as a cover letter or promotional/marketing information.

B. Pricing is not requested for this solicitation and **must not** be submitted with the response. (See *Pricing*.)

C. *Additional Copies and Redacted Copy of the Response Packet*

In addition to the original *Response Packet*, the following items should be submitted:

1. *Additional Copies of the Response Packet*
 - a. Five (5) complete hard copies (marked "COPY") of the *Response Packet*.
 - b. Six (6) electronic copies of the *Response Packet*, preferably on flash drives and in PDF format. Do not send electronic copies via email or fax.
 - i. The *Information for Evaluation* and *Exceptions Form* sub-sections should be a separate file on the flash drive.
 - c. All additional hard copies and electronic copies **must** be identical to the original hard copy. In case of a discrepancy, the original hard copy governs.
 - d. If ADVA requests additional copies of the response, the copies **must** be delivered within the timeframe specified in the request.
2. One (1) redacted (marked "REDACTED") copy the original *Response Packet*, preferably on a flash drive and in PDF format. A CD will also be acceptable. Do not send electronic copies via email or fax. (See *Proprietary Information*.)

1.7 ACCEPTANCE OF REQUIREMENTS

A. Unless a Prospective Proposal expressly and conspicuously identifies any exception or exceptions to any of the Requirements in the Requirements Section(s) of this Solicitation by listing them on the *Exceptions Form* (See *Response Packet*), Prospective Offeror's understands and agrees its submission of a response to represent that its response meets all such Requirements.

- B. A Prospective Offeror's response may be rejected if a Prospective Offeror's takes exception to any Requirements in the Requirements Section(s) of this Solicitation.

SECTION 2 – REQUIREMENTS

- ***Do not provide responses to items in this section unless specifically and expressly required.***

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs (ADVA) is seeking written proposals for a Partnership for the future site on which to relocate the operations of the Arkansas State Veterans Home located in Fayetteville (ASVH-F or Facility). The current site of the Facility is nearing the end of its useful life. The United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will fund the renovation of existing structures or the construction of a new home, on State owned land. Funding from the VA is contingent on a State match of thirty-five (35) percent.

The future structure, location and ultimate success of the ASVH-F depends on numerous factors, including, but not limited to, changing veteran demographics within the community, competition in the skilled nursing industry, and healthcare labor market trends.

2.2 SPECIFICATIONS

A. CURRENT ENVIRONMENT

ADVA currently operates a total of 186 VA recognized Medicaid/Medicare skilled certified beds located between two (2) facilities. The Arkansas State Veterans Home at Fayetteville (ASVH-F) is located at 1179 North College Avenue in Fayetteville, Arkansas. It is a 90-bed skilled care nursing facility, residing on the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) North West campus. The campus was originally a regional hospital. Officials broke ground on the ASVH-F in September 2004, at which time, the fifth (5th) and sixth (6th) floors were converted to residential housing for Veterans, and an administration tower was built to create the Arkansas State Veterans Home – Fayetteville. Originally licensed for 108 beds, the Facility is current licensed for ninety (90) residents. The Facility provides a comfortable and supportive atmosphere for our Veterans.

ASVH-F currently holds the following certifications: Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), Arkansas Office of Long Term Care (OLTC) licensed and certified; and a recognized Veterans Association contracted facility.

B. OBJECTIVES AND GOALS

It is the intent of ADVA to partner with local entities, either public or private, to find the most advantageous location for the future Facility. The ideal location, as identified in Attachment 1, will be one that takes into consideration many factors, including but not limited to, the changing demographics of the veterans within the community, the access to quality healthcare for the veterans, the healthcare labor market in the community, partnerships in and around the community, access for families of the veterans served. It is the intention of the stakeholders to use an objective, data informed approach with a focus and priority on caring for the present and future residents and their eligible dependents. The stakeholders are committed to a faithful stewardship of State and Federal resources and seek to be transparent in seeking a consensus among the stakeholders.

It is the future intent of ADVA to partner with as many entities to ensure the best care for veterans in the future operation of the Facility.

C. REQUIRMENTS

1. Site Requirements

The United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) requires that the site of the project is in reasonable proximity to a sufficient concentration and population of veterans that are sixty-five (65) years of age and older and that there is a reasonable basis to conclude that the facility, when complete will be fully occupied. The site shall be:

- a. Within the State of Arkansas
- b. Ninety (90) miles of the existing site, and no more than a two (2) hour drive from the existing site. See Attachment 2
- c. A minimum of twenty (20) acres, to allow for a minimum ninety (90) bed facility with ability to expand.

See Attachment 1, Needs Assessment for more information about the Veteran demographics in the State of Arkansas. It is preferable that the new site be located in North West Arkansas, but all proposals within the ninety (90) mile radius from the existing Facility will be considered.

2. Proposal Documents

All materials submitted shall become the property of the State. Hard copies should be bound on 8.5 x 11-inch-wide paper, with a table of contents and tabbed sections. The proposals should be in the following order:

- a. Cover Page (1 Page)
- b. Table of Contents (1 Page)
- c. Executive Summary (2 Pages)
- d. Real Property and Location (12 pages)
- e. Proximity to Hospitals and Clinical Services (2 Pages)
- f. Workforce and Services (2 pages)
- g. Surrounding Community (4 pages)
- h. Community Partnerships and Incentives (4 pages)
- i. Appendices (no requirements)

SECTION 3 – SELECTION

- **Do not provide responses to items in this section.**

3.1 SELECTION PROCESS

- A. The buyer will review each *Technical Proposal Packet* to verify submission Requirements have been met. *Site Proposal Packets* that do not meet submission *Requirements* will be rejected and will not be evaluated.
- B. An ADVA-appointed Evaluation Committee will evaluate and score qualifying Technical Proposals.
 1. Members of the Evaluation Committee will individually review and evaluate proposals and complete an Individual Score Worksheet for each proposal. Individual scoring for each Evaluation Criteria will be based on the following Scoring Description.

Score	Description
10	The proposed site clearly possesses the location and characteristics to meet the needs of the Veterans of the State of Arkansas.
5	The proposed site possesses the location and characteristics to meet the needs of the Veterans of the State of Arkansas.
0	The proposed site does not possess the location and characteristics to meet the needs of the Veterans of the State of Arkansas.

2. After initial individual evaluations are complete, the Evaluation Committee members will meet to discuss their individual ratings. At this consensus meeting, each member will be afforded an opportunity to discuss his or her rating for each evaluation criteria.
 3. After Evaluation committee members have had an opportunity to discuss their individual scores with the committee, the individual Evaluation committee members will be given the opportunity to change their initial individual scores, if they feel that is appropriate.
 4. The final individual scores of the Evaluation Committee members will be recorded on the Pre-Interview Consensus Score Sheets and averaged to determine the group or consensus score and rank for each proposal.
 5. Other agencies, consultants, and experts may also examine documents at the discretion of the ADVA.
- C. The Evaluation Committee will move forward with discussions with the entities that provide the most advantageous proposal based on score as outlined in Section B 1-5. Discussions may be, but are not limited to, teleconferences, Zoom meetings, or physical on-site visits. Final Evaluation will be based on Proposer's response and follow up questions during discussions.
1. After final discussion, the Evaluation Committee members will individually review and evaluate the interview and complete an Individual Score Worksheet for each interview. Individual scoring for each interview will be based on the Scoring Descriptions in 3.1. B.1.
 2. After all interviews are complete, the Evaluation Committee members will have the opportunity to discuss the interviews and change their individual interview scores on the Post-Interview Consensus Score Sheet, if they feel that is appropriate.
 3. The final individual scores of the Evaluation Committee members will be recorded on the Post-Interview Consensus Score Sheets and averaged to determine the group or consensus score and rank for each proposal.
- D. ADVA will move forward to recommend the highest-ranking, most advantageous proposal to the State of Arkansas.

3.2 EXPLANATION OF THE SUB-SECTIONS OF THE SITE PROPOSAL

A. Workforce and Services

1. Describe the total labor force in the community surrounding the proposed site for the new facility. This should include, but is not limited to, the workforce required to operate and support the new facility.
2. Describe the Higher Education Facilities in the surrounding and immediate areas. This should include, but is not limited to, Community Colleges, Trade and Technical Schools, and any Education and Certifications Programs in the area that are Health Care Related.
3. Identify the number of current Health Care Providers Licenses in the Area.
4. Any additional Workforce and Services available within the area that could be advantageous to the new facility.

B. Proximity to Hospitals, Clinical Services, and Emergency Services

1. Identify and describe the proximity to Hospitals, VA Community Centers and other specialty medical services.
2. Identify and describe the proximity to Emergency Service to include approximate responses times for, but not limited to, police, fire and emergency medical services.
3. Identify and describe the proximity and availability of Funeral Home services in the

area.

4. Identify any additional access to medical or emergency services that could be accessed by the new facility.

C. Real Property

1. Provide the legal description and current ownership of the proposed location.
2. Describe the size of the property, current and potential zoning.
3. Describe the access to utilities. Utilities include, but are not limited to, electric, water, sewer, gas, telecommunications.
4. Describe the location's access to parking and transportation services. This should include, but is not limited to, highways, airports, and other public transportation services that will be accessible to the location.
5. Describe the location's topography, current condition, and what will be needed for conversion of use to the land to accommodate a new facility.
6. Describe the surrounding and adjoining use of neighboring properties.
7. Provide a map or overview of the site to include specific area and adjoining areas.
8. Describe any other real property characteristics that would be beneficial to the new facility.

D. Surrounding Community

1. Describe the character and availability of community-based services in the area.
2. Describe how the location is a veteran-friendly community and the current and/or future access to Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs).
3. Identify and describe the volunteer programs in the area that may be willing to support the new facility.
4. Identify and describe the access to lodging, dining, and hotels in the area to include, but not limited to, motels and shelter services.
5. Describe any other surrounding community characteristic that would be beneficial to the new facility.

E. Continuity of Operations and Care

1. Describe how you anticipate the relocation of the current residents would be facilitated to the new facility on your location. What obstacles would need to be overcome?
2. Describe how the location would be providing convenience of the transfer of current operations to the new facility.
3. Describe the economic impact to the area with the transfer of operations to the new facility.
4. Describe any other areas that the location would contribute to the continuity of care and operations for the current residents.

F. Community Partnerships and Incentives

1. Describe any perceived public and/or private partnerships that could be available to the new location.

2. Identify any incentives that your location will provide the ADVA.

3.3 SITE PROPOSAL SCORE

A. The *Information for Evaluation* section has been divided into sub-sections.

1. In each sub-section, items/questions have each been assigned a maximum point value of ten (10) points. The total point value for each sub-section is reflected in the table below as the Maximum Raw Points Possible.
2. The ADVA has assigned Weighted Percentages to each sub-section according to its significance.

Information for Evaluation Sub-Sections	Maximum Raw Points Possible	Sub-Section's Weighted Percentage	* Maximum Weighted Score Possible
Workforce and Services	10	35%	350
Proximity to Hospitals and Clinical Services	10	20%	200
Real Property and Location	10	20%	200
Surrounding Community	10	15%	150
Continuity of Operations	10	5%	50
Community Partnerships and Incentives	10	5%	50
Total Technical Score	60	100%	1000

*Sub-Section's Percentage Weight x Total Technical Maximum Weighted Score = Maximum Weighted Score Possible for the sub-section.

B. The proposal's weighted score for each sub-section will be determined using the following formula:

$$(A/B)*C = D$$

A = Actual Raw Points received for sub-section in evaluation
 B = Maximum Raw Points possible for sub-section
 C = Maximum Weighted Score possible for sub-section
 D = Weighted Score received for sub-section

C. The proposal's weighted scores for sub-sections will be added to determine the Total Technical Score for the proposal.

3.4 SITE VISIT/INTERVIEW

A. The evaluation committee reserves the right to conduct Site Visits and/or Interviews with any or all of the proposed sites they deem may present the most advantageous site for the placement of Facility.

B. Submissions shall identify one (1) Project Lead at the time of interview confirmation who shall attend the site visit/interview as part of the evaluation process.

C. The buyer will create a second set of score sheets by copying the Excel workbook (including the scores entered) and titling each of the score sheets in that workbook as the "Post-Demonstration" score sheets.

D. The Evaluation Committee will interview the Submitter's identified Project Lead using a pre-determined set of interview questions. Follow up questions may be asked based on responses given by the Project Lead.

E. After each site visit/interview is complete, the Evaluation Committee members will have the opportunity to discuss the site visit/interview and revise their individual scores on the Post-Demonstration Consensus Score Sheet based on the information provided during the site visit/interview.

F. The final individual scores of the evaluators on the Post-Demonstration Consensus Score Sheets will be

averaged to determine the final score for each response.

3.5 PROSPECTIVE OFFEROR'S ACCEPTANCE OF EVALUATION TECHNIQUE

The submission of a *Technical Proposal Packet* signifies the Prospective Offeror's understanding and agreement that some subjective value judgments will be made during the evaluation and scoring of the technical proposals.

Additionally, the State reserves the right to negotiate with one, selected, all, or none of the prospective Offeror(s) responding to this RFI to obtain the best value for the State of Arkansas. Discussions could entail ancillary properties, products, services, pricing, terminology or any other issue that may mitigate the State's risk. The State shall consider all issues negotiable and not artificially constrained by internal corporate policies. Additional information in support of a proposal or a request to amend the Offeror's proposal may be made if deemed necessary by the State.