



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Strategic Planning Services for Pittsburgh Community Services Inc. (PCSI)

Proposals Due: Friday, May 15, 2026

ABOUT PCSI

Pittsburgh Community Services Inc. (PCSI) is Pittsburgh's Community Action Agency, the city's federally-designated anti-poverty agency, a private nonprofit organization founded in 1983. PCSI works alongside individuals, families, and communities to bridge the gaps between where they are and where they want to be, providing services spanning food security, utility assistance, employment supports, financial stability, and economic mobility. Our vision is a city where all Pittsburghers are empowered to thrive and achieve overall well-being.

As a Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) eligible entity, PCSI operates within the ROMA (Results Oriented Management and Accountability) framework and is subject to CSBG Organizational Standards, including Standards 6.1 through 6.5 governing strategic planning. The strategic plan produced through this engagement must meet or exceed those standards.

PURPOSE

PCSI is seeking proposals from qualified firms or consultants to lead a comprehensive strategic planning process culminating in a formal three-year strategic plan governing calendar years 2027, 2028, and 2029. This process will help PCSI chart a clear, actionable course for organizational growth and community impact during a period of intentional expansion and investment. The resulting plan must function as a living document that guides decision-making, resource allocation, and accountability across the organization, and must be aligned with the ROMA framework and CSBG Organizational Standards.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The resulting plan should include, but not be limited by, discussion of the following organizational priorities:

- **Customer Segment Analysis.** A deeper understanding of who we serve, who we are not yet reaching, and how our service mix aligns with community need will be central to our next chapter.
- **Budget Growth Through Smart and Sustainable Choices.** PCSI is committed to growing its budget in ways that are diversified, resilient, and mission-aligned. Increasing community-sourced funding is a key aim.



- Community Involvement, Engagement, and Expansion. As Pittsburgh's federally-designated anti-poverty agency, PCSI holds a unique responsibility not only to serve individuals and families, but to activate and strengthen the broader community's capacity to understand, address, and ultimately reduce poverty and its root causes. In the next three years, PCSI aims to deepen its engagement with community stakeholders, expand its physical presence and partnerships across the city, and pursue growth strategies that extend our reach and impact. This may include opening new service centers, co-locating case managers at partner sites, merging with smaller community-based organizations whose missions align with our own, and cultivating community-wide awareness of and participation in the work of poverty reduction.

SCOPE OF WORK

The selected firm will be expected to lead or facilitate the following:

Stage One: Preparation

The engagement will begin with a structured preparation phase in which the consultant works with PCSI leadership to define process parameters, clarify roles and responsibilities, and develop a detailed work plan and timeline for the full engagement.

Stage Two: Assessment

The assessment stage will include:

- A landscape analysis of the anti-poverty and human services environment in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County, with attention to demographic, economic, and social trends affecting the communities PCSI serves
- Key informant interviews with relevant stakeholders, including staff, board members, community partners, and customers
- Secondary data analysis drawing on existing internal reports, program outcome data, financial information, and external community data
- A facilitated SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis engaging a broad cross-section of internal and external stakeholders
- An agency review that examines PCSI's mission, values, and vision for continued relevance and alignment, and assesses the alignment and performance of programs, services, and finances
- A Community Needs Assessment synthesizing the data and findings from the above activities into a formal document that identifies the priority needs of the communities PCSI serves. This document will serve as a foundational input to the strategic plan and may be shared externally.



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The assessment stage should incorporate customer satisfaction data and customer input in accordance with CSBG Organizational Standard 6.4. (Some of these data have been collected by PCSI in Spring 2026 via an extensive customer survey. This information will be shared.)

Stage Three: Planning

Drawing on the findings of the assessment, the consultant will facilitate a structured planning process to:

- Prioritize the strategic issues facing PCSI
- Develop SMART goals, objectives, and proposed performance measures and indicators aligned with PCSI's strategic priorities and the six national ROMA goals
- Ensure goals address family, agency, and community outcomes in accordance with CSBG Organizational Standard 6.3
- Write the three-year strategic plan document governing CY 2027, 2028, and 2029

Stage Four: Implementation Framework

The final plan should not simply articulate goals and objectives but equip PCSI to act on them. The consultant will work with PCSI leadership to develop:

- Action plans for each strategic objective
- A monitoring and reporting framework, such as a dashboard or scorecard, that allows PCSI to track progress towards goals on a regular basis
- Recommendations for integrating the strategic plan into routine operations and governance

Board and Stakeholder Engagement

The consultant will be expected to engage PCSI's Board of Directors meaningfully throughout the process, including:

- Structured participation in assessment and planning activities
- A Board Briefing and Work Session in September 2026 to review findings and shape strategic direction
- A formal presentation of the draft strategic plan at the October 2026 Board meeting
- Support for final Board approval at the December 2026 Board meeting, at which point collateral materials will be shared



DELIVERABLES

The following deliverables are expected:

- A Community Needs Assessment suitable for internal use and external sharing
- A three-year strategic plan governing CY 2027, 2028, and 2029, including goals, objectives, proposed performance measures, and an implementation and monitoring framework.
- A graphic summary of the strategic plan suitable for sharing with staff and public stakeholders

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

PCSI will give favorable consideration to firms or consultants with demonstrated experience in one or more of the following areas:

- Strategic planning for Community Action Agencies or other human services nonprofits
- Familiarity with Pittsburgh and Allegheny County nonprofit and human services landscape
- Experience with funding diversification, grant strategy, and donor development
- Nonprofit agency mergers, acquisitions, and organizational consolidation
- Brand recognition, public outreach, and community engagement

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Proposals should include the following:

- Proposed approach and methodology
- Proposed timeline aligned with the milestones outlined below
- Team composition and brief staff bios
- Organizational overview and relevant experience, including representative client engagements
- Fee structure, budget detail, and total cost
- At least two references from comparable engagements



PROPOSED KEY MILESTONES TIMELINE

Milestone	Target Date
Proposals Due	May 15 2026
Firm Selected	May 29 2026
Engagement Begins	June 2026
Board Briefing and Work Session	September 2026
Draft Plan Presented at Quarterly Board Meeting	October 20 2026
Final Board Approval	Mid December 2026
Strategic Plan Effective	January 1 2027

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Please submit proposals electronically to Sarah Cook, Executive Director, at sarahc@pghcsi.org no later than **8pm on Friday, May 15, 2026**. Questions regarding this RFP may be directed to the same contact.

PCSI reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, to waive technical deficiencies, and to accept the proposal deemed most advantageous to the organization.