

June 24, 2025

Mr. Benson Medina, Director
County of Hawai'i – Department of Research & Development
25 Aupuni Street, Suite 1301
Hilo, HI 96720

**Re: Statement of Qualification and Expression of Interest for Community Planning (Grant Writer) –
FY2025-2026 Notice to Providers of Professional Services (HRS 103D-304)**

Dear Mr. Medina:

CNC Consulting respectfully submits this Statement of Qualification and Expression of Interest for the County of Hawai'i's Invitation for Professional Services in Category of Services – RD.2) Community Planning (Grant Writer).

Introduction to CNC Consulting

As the owner and chief principal officer of CNC Consulting, I bring over thirty-five years of experience in local, state, and federal government grant writing, grant management, budget development, strategic analysis, and contract administration with various governmental and higher educational organizations in Alaska, Hawai'i, Idaho, Texas, and Nevada.

After retiring as the Administrative Services/Financial Officer for the City of Reno Fire Department in 2020, and relocating to Moscow, Idaho, I embarked on an adventure to establish my own consulting business to assist state, county and local government agencies with their grant submission and management needs.

Having worked for the City of Reno from 2003 through 2020, I have witnessed both the good times as well as the bad. From the "boom era" in 2004 through 2008, to the "bust era" leading to the great economic downturn from 2009 through 2016, I had first-hand experience managing dramatic funding reductions, which led to personnel lay-offs and massive budget reductions, severely affecting public service deliveries to our community.

To this day, many of our local, state, and federal governmental agencies' budgets and personnel resources have not rebounded to the pre-recession days. Agencies have maintained zero-based budgets for well over a decade with no increases in services, supplies or equipment. Any increases in budgets have most often been attributed to personnel collective labor agreement cost of living increases and the ever-increasing costs of fringe benefits.

With continued budget restrictions, agencies need to explore as many grant opportunities as possible to seek additional external funding from federal, state, local and private organizations. Having witnessing this need first hand, and fortunately being very successful in obtaining grants for the Reno Fire Department for more than 18 years; the County of Hawai'i Fire Department for the past five years; and two local volunteer fire departments one here in Idaho, the Deary Rural Fire Department for the past three years; and one in Waco,

Texas, the Elm Mott Volunteer Fire Department for the past year, I continue to utilize my experience and success in securing grants to assist other service organizations do the same.

Our Grant Writing and Management Services We Provide

Throughout my government service career, both in Nevada and Alaska, along with my current consulting business clients in Hawai'i, Idaho and Texas, I have secured and managed over \$85 million dollars in grant funding from local, state, and federal grants funding sources, as well as numerous private grants & donations.

While my specialty is exploring and securing public safety fire grants for all types of needs from personnel, equipment, training, vehicle acquisition, facility upgrades and communications, I also have been successful in acquiring and managing grants in the areas of Community Development, Transportation and Housing and Urban Development.

My current work with the County of Hawai'i Fire Department, as a grant writer and grant manager, has allowed me to create strong partnerships with Hawai'i County personnel from various Departments, embracing open and continuous communication.

In order to continue to develop good, justifiable, and well written grant applications, as well as effectively manage current County of Hawai'i awarded grants, I strive to keep current on local, state, and federal issues that impact the County and State of Hawai'i as a whole.

Moving forward, I will assist your organization in all aspects of the grant writing and grant management process including, but not limited to:

- Identifying grants applicable to your organization.
- Justifying fiscal, economic, and service needs to satisfy the grant requirements.
- Assisting and developing funding plans for your grant priorities.
- Writing and developing your grant documentation and application.
- Assisting in the implementation of your successful grant award.
- Communicating with grant awarding agencies on your behalf.
- Reporting including preparing your financial status and performance reports.
- Implementing your award, creating processes for implementation and tracking.
- Assisting with the processes for procuring your awarded items based on your departmental policies and procedures.
- Monitoring your grant expenditures, submitting payment requests, reconciling grant awarded items.
- Complying with grant monitoring, final reporting and policy development for ongoing monitoring and grant adherence.

Our Grant Writing and Management Approach

To achieve successful grant awards, I utilize a systematic “phased” approach applying various methodologies to develop documents and justification for effective grant applications. The following outline describes my grant application and management processes in the phases we will cover when applying for/or managing an existing grant:

- **Phase 1 – Intake Form**
 - Identify Contacts & Organizational Information
 - Identify Critical Organization Needs
 - Identify Financial Need
 - Grant Funding – Public/Private/Donations
 - Justification for Budgetary Increases from Current Governing Body
- **Phase 2 – Questionnaire**
 - Types of Services Interested In:
 - Grant Identification
 - Grant Justification
 - Application Preparation
 - Grant Implementation
 - Grant Monitoring & Reporting
 - Grant Compliance
 - Based Upon Services Identified Above:
 - Discuss Funding Interests
 - Obtain Direction toward Grant Opportunities to Pursue
 - Personnel
 - Equipment
 - Training
 - Facility Upgrades
 - Communications
 - Other
 - Review of Previous Grant Submittals
 - Including Awards & Rejections
- **Phase 3 – Research & Identification of Applicable Grant Opportunities**
 - Identify and research grant opportunities tailored to your needs.
 - Ensure any matching funds required by specific grants are achievable by your organization.
 - Ensure any pre-approval prior to submitting a grant is obtained by your department if required.
 - Discuss opportunities on a continuous basis.
 - Select the most appropriate and advantageous grant to apply for.
 - Review and decipher Notice of Funding Opportunities (NOFO) for specific grants to ensure departmental agreement for compliance.
- **Phase 4 – Grant Application Development**
 - Identify/Assist with Data Collection

- Most of this information is the “boilerplate” for a majority of grant applications:
 - Current SAM Registration/DUNS Number
 - Detail on Critical Infrastructure Protected
 - Population
 - Services Provided by Organization
 - Operating & Capital Budgets
 - Funding Reserves & Sources
- Creation of a Good Grant Narrative
 - This is the “meat & potatoes” of your grant application.
 - We will develop a good narrative that will explain, document, and provide background information on the following five areas:
 - Organization & Community You Serve
 - Description of your organization and community.
 - What are the demands of your organization based on the needs of the community?
 - Financial Need
 - Why do you need assistance and is it consistent with the intent of the grant program?
 - Describe your financial distress, including budget constraints.
 - Describe what attempts have been made to secure funding elsewhere and why financial distress is out of your control.
 - Project Description/Budget Justification
 - Clearly discuss project objectives and their relationship to budget and risk analysis.
 - Describe how the various activities applied for are consistent with project objectives, your mission, and local requirements
 - Operations and Safety/Cost Benefit
 - What is the benefit to your department if the grant is awarded?
 - How will you address the operations and needs of your organization, including cost effectiveness and sharing assets?
 - Include details about gaining the maximum benefits by citing required costs.
 - Is the request consistent with your mission?
 - Statement of Effect/Impact on Daily Operations
 - What effect will your request, if funded, have on overall effectiveness, daily operations, and the reduction of common risks?
 - How frequently will the items be used and at what capacity?
 - What impact will this project have on your community and the saving of lives and property?
- Phase 5 – Grant Application Review & Submittal
 - We will assist/prepare your grant application for review and approval.
 - Provide a complete application for your submittal.

- **Phase 6 – Grant Award & Management**

- Depending upon your need, we can assist with:
 - Grant Implementation
 - Create processes for implementation and tracking.
 - Assist with the procurement of awarded items based on policies & procedures.
 - Grant Monitoring
 - Track expenditures
 - Submit payment requests
 - Reconcile grant awarded items
 - Grant Compliance
 - Final reporting
 - Policy development for on-going monitoring and grant adherence.

List of Recent Projects and References

The following is a list of grants I have prepared and managed, the organizations they were prepared for, a brief description of the grant, and a contact for the organization:

County of Hawai'i Fire Department – Assistant Fire Chief Ian Chadwick - (808) 932-2907

Grants Awarded:

- FY 2023 – Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency, – Assistance to Firefighter's Grant Program (DHS/FEMA - AFG) – Incident Command and Hazard Zone Training Grant for Fire Personnel - \$537,595
- FY 2021 – DHS/FEMA – AFG – Washer/Extractors & Dryers - \$544,390
- FY 2020 – DHS/FEMA - AFG Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) – Personnel Request – 9 Firefighting Positions - \$3,511,641
- FY 2020 – DHS/FEMA – AFG – COVID-19 Supplemental – COVID PPE Response Equipment Reimbursement - \$379,911

Grants Applied for (Pending Award Notification):

- FY 2024 – DHS/FEMA - AFG – SAFER – Personnel Request – 12 Firefighting Positions - \$4,343,148
- FY 2024 – DHS/FEMA Fire Prevention and Safety (FP&S) Grant – Fire Arson/Investigation Equipment - \$46,725
- FY 2024 – DHS/FEMA – AFG – Radios - \$798,164

Deary Rural Fire District – Fire Chief Tim Jones - (208)596-5780

Grants Awarded:

- FY 2024 – U.S Department of the Interior, Office of Wildland Grant – Slip On Tanker Units - \$97,000

- FY 2023 – Idaho EMS American Recovery Plan – Ambulance Grant - \$189,028
- FY 2022 – DHS/FEMA - AFG – Personal Protective Gear (PPE – Turnouts & SCBA's) - \$232,306
- FY 2022 – Idaho EMS LifeSaver Grant – Turnouts, Boots & Gloves - \$24,850
- FY 2020 – Idaho Fire Chiefs Fire Fighter's License Plate Grant Award – Fire Safety Awareness & Educational Materials - \$2,222

Grants Applied for (Pending Award Notification):

- FY 2024 – DHS/FEMA - AFG – Vehicle Grant - Brush Truck - \$350,000
- FY 2024 – DHS/FEMA – AFG – Medical Equipment/Defibrillator - \$110,000

Elm Mott Volunteer Fire Department – Fire Chief Chris Pechacek - (254)744-4754

Grants Awarded:

- FY 2023 – DHS/FEMA - AFG – Personal Protective Gear (SCBAs) - \$429,900

Grants Applied for (Pending Award Notification):

- FY 2024 – DHS/FEMA - AFG – Vehicle Grant – Water Tender - \$465,000
- FY 2024 – DHS/FEMA – AFG – Regional Radios - \$460,620
- FY 2024 – Dennis Leary Foundation Grant – Medical Response Unit - \$37,325

Reno Fire Department – Fire Chief David Cochran - (775) 334-2300

Grants Awarded:

- FY 2019 – DHS/FEMA - AFG SAFER – 8 Firefighting Positions - \$3,004,000
- FY 2019 – Firehouse Subs Foundation – Defibrillator - \$42,500
- FY 2019 – 2003 – DHS /FEMA – Emergency Management Performance Grants - \$284,000 annually – total of \$4.5 million dollars for emergency management planning, training, and exercises.
- FY 2018 – Pennington Foundation – Ladder Truck - \$1,511,000
- FY 2018 – DHS/FEMA - AFG – Turnouts - \$452,000
- FY 2018 – 2010 – DHS/NV Dept of Public Safety – State Homeland Security Program – total of \$3.5 million dollars for hazardous materials response training, equipment, and chemical detection equipment for Regional Haz-Mat Team.
- FY 2017 – DHS/FEMA - AFG – Defibrillators - \$240,000
- FY 2014 – DHS/FEMA - AFG – SCBAs - \$750,000
- FY 2013 – DHS/FEMA - AFG – Extrication Equipment - \$384,000
- FY 2011 – DHS/FEMA – Fire Management Assistance Grant - \$2.9 million dollars for wildland fire reimbursements for two major fires, Caughlin Fire and Washoe Fire.
- FY 2010 – DHS/FEMA - AFG – Regional Communications Grant - \$686,945

- FY 2010/2011 – DHS/FEMA - AFG SAFER – 74 Firefighting Positions - \$15.5 million dollars.

Closing Statement

I am an initiative-taking individual with a strong work ethic. I have demonstrated the ability to effectively manage a heavy workload with multiple and often changing priorities. I possess excellent verbal and written communication skills that enable me to effectively communicate with all members of your organization.

I have the ability to solve diverse complex problems and never back away from a tough situation. I consider myself a collaborator and would enjoy the opportunity to continue to be part of your team.

If you have any questions, or need any additional information, please feel free to contact me at (775) 544-0618. I look forward to hearing from you regarding your grant writing and management needs.

Thank you for your consideration!

Sincerely,
Michele Hobbs

STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS

- Over thirty-five years of experience in preparing, submitting, securing, and managing state, local and federal grants for all types of public and private grants listed below:
 - DHS /FEMA – Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG)
 - Over \$42 million dollars in grant awards for Fire and EMS training, equipment, and vehicles.
 - DHS/FEMA – AFG Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grants
 - Over \$21.5 million dollars in grant awards for firefighting positions.
 - DHS/FEMA – Fire Management Assistance Grants (FMAG)
 - Over \$7.5 million dollars for wildland fire reimbursements.
 - DHS /FEMA – Emergency Management Performance Grants (EMPG)
 - Over \$4.5 million dollars for emergency management planning, training, and exercises.
 - DHS/NV Dept of Public Safety – State Homeland Security Program (SHSP)
 - Over \$3.5 million dollars for hazardous materials response training, equipment, and chemical detection equipment for the Regional Haz-Mat Team.
 - USDA/BLM – Fire Mitigation Program
 - \$1.5 million dollars for fire fuel mitigation program to reduce wildland fire risk.
 - USDOJ – Office of Wildland Fire
 - \$97,000 for rural fire response equipment.
 - Washoe County Local Emergency Planning Grants
 - Over \$500,000 in grant awards for emergency preparedness equipment.
 - State of Idaho – Emergency Medical Division (EMS)
 - Over \$200,000 in grant awards for vehicles and safety equipment.
 - Private Grants, Foundation Grants & Donations
 - \$1.5 million dollar grant from Pennington Foundation for Aerial Ladder Truck.
 - \$42,500 donation from Firehouse Subs Foundation for a Defibrillator.

- \$15,000 donation from Fireman's Fund Insurance for fire prevention education materials.
- Over thirty-five years of contract administration experience including specification development; contract preparation; billing; and expenditure and revenue management for diverse types of personnel and service contracts.
- Over thirty-five years of administrative experience managing programs and personnel, scheduling projects, coordinating resources, and assigning priorities.
- Over thirty-five years of budget development, forecasting, management, strategic analysis, and implementation experience with various governmental and higher educational organizations.
- Proven ability to interact and efficiently coordinate resources from internal and external agencies to achieve goals and objectives in a professional manner.
- Proven ability to work effectively with internal and external staff with various levels of authority and educational backgrounds.
- Proven ability to manage a heavy workload with multiple and often changing priorities under intense stress.
- Proficient with various publishing, database, spreadsheet, word processing and financial accounting programs to include Microsoft PowerPoint, Publisher, Excel, Word, and Access.
- Extremely resolved with a strong professional work ethic and integrity.

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Financial, Budgetary & Grant Management

Responsible for all financial, budgetary and grant management activities for various local, state, and higher educational organizations:

- County of Hawai'i Fire Department – Responsible for grant development, submittal and management of the Department's DHS/FEMA awarded grants as follows:
 - FY 2023 – Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program - Incident Command and Hazard Zone Training Grant for Fire Personnel - \$537,595
 - FY 2021 – Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program – Washer/Extractors & Dryers - \$544,390
 - FY 2020 – Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program SAFER – 9 Firefighting

- Positions - \$3,511,641
 - FY 2020 – Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program – COVID-19 Supplemental – COVID PPE Response Equipment Reimbursement - \$379,911
- Deary Rural Fire District - Responsible for grant development, submittal and management of the Department's awarded grants as follows:
 - FY 2024 – U.S Department of the Interior, Office of Wildland Grant – Slip On Tanker Units - \$97,000
 - FY 2023 – Idaho EMS American Recovery Plan – Ambulance Grant - \$189,028
 - FY 2022 – DHS/FEMA - AFG – Personal Protective Gear (PPE – Turnouts & SCBA's) - \$232,306
 - FY 2022 – Idaho EMS LifeSaver Grant – Turnouts, Boots & Gloves - \$24,850
 - FY 2020 – Idaho Fire Chiefs Fire Fighter's License Plate Grant Award – Fire Safety Awareness & Educational Materials - \$2,222
- Elm Mott Volunteer Fire Department - Responsible for grant development, submittal and management of the Department's awarded grants as follows:
 - FY 2023 – DHS/FEMA - AFG – Personal Protective Gear (SCBAs) - \$429,900
- City of Reno Fire Department - Responsible for the overall development, preparation, administration and management of the Department's \$45.0 Million-dollar annual operating, capital and grant funded budget.
 - Forecast budget requirement for annual program staffing, (wages, benefits, and overtime), equipment, materials, services, supplies and capital equipment.
 - Translate decisions and data into required budgetary documentation and justification to support annual budget request.
 - Prepare, present, and justify the Department's annual budget submission, both operating and capital, to Finance, City Manager, and the City Council for adoption.
 - Manage Departmental grant and contract program in excess of \$15 Million dollars annually with federal, state, and local agencies for personnel services and supplies.

- City of Reno Finance Department, Budget Division – Responsible for the development and preparation of the City's \$365.0 Million dollar operating and capital budget.
 - Coordinate with all City departments in the annual development, analysis, and review of individual budget submissions.
 - Establish budget periods, processes, and communication plan for all departments.
 - Communicate final approved budgets to all departments. Ensure budgets are established correctly in the financial tracking system.
 - Monitor expenditures and revenues for all City departments; provide monthly analysis; and communicate concerns to department heads identifying adjustments required.
 - Administer and oversee budget revisions and augmentations for all departments.
 - Provide budget analysis and information to City Council requests.
- State of Alaska, Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) - Provide budgetary development, grant management, analysis and monitoring for Section Managers and the Regional Director for the annual \$12.5 Million-dollar FAA/FHA grant funded departmental budget. Prepare monthly and annual budgetary reports on revenues and expenditures; provide financial contract and grant management; and forecast budgetary needs based on divisional objectives and missions.

Administrative and Personnel Management

As the Administrative Services Manager for the City of Reno Fire Department, responsible for the daily oversight, planning, management, supervision and coordination of personnel resources and programmatic activities of the Administrative Services Division.

- Supervise positions in the Administrative Services Division, including fiscal affairs and budgeting; payroll; supply; purchasing; records management; customer service; accounts receivable; accounts payable; grants management; facilities management; workers compensation and contract and agreement management.
- Provide staff guidance and support as needed to promote a positive work environment for increased work activity, providing a higher quality of client services.

Manage the development and implementation of the Reno Fire Department mission; goals; objectives; priorities; and policies and procedures for each Division.

- Establish appropriate service and staffing levels within budgetary restrictions; monitor and evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery methods and procedures for the Administrative Services Division, as well as other Divisions within the Fire Department.

WORK HISTORY

1/20 – Current	<u>Chief Principal Officer,</u> CNC Consulting	Moscow, ID
9/06 – 1/20	<u>Administrative Services Manager,</u> City of Reno - Reno Fire Department	Reno, NV
10/03-9/06	<u>Senior Management Analyst,</u> City of Reno - Finance Department, Budget Division	Reno, NV
8/02 – 10/03	<u>Coordinator, Budget and Personnel,</u> University of Nevada Reno, University Studies Abroad Consortium	Reno, NV
4/98 – 5/02	<u>Administrative Manager II,</u> State of Alaska – Department of Transportation & Public Facilities, Construction and CIP Support	Fairbanks, AK
2/93 – 4/98	<u>Administrative Manager I,</u> State of Alaska – Department of Transportation & Public Facilities, Maintenance and Operations, Buildings	Fairbanks, AK
9/97 - 1/98	<u>Acting Program Budget Analyst III,</u> State of Alaska – Department of Transportation & Public Facilities, Northern Region Administration	Fairbanks, AK
7/92 - 2/93	<u>Construction Accountant,</u> University of Alaska Fairbanks – Statewide Planning & Construction	Fairbanks, AK
9/90 - 6/92	<u>Administrative Assistant I,</u> State of Alaska – Department of Military & Veterans Affairs, Facility Mgmt. Office	Anchorage, AK
9/89 - 9/90	<u>Personnel & Operations Manager,</u> Lamonts Apparel, Inc.	Anchorage, AK

EDUCATION

University of Alaska, Fairbanks

Bachelor of Business Administration Degree, B.B.A., Marketing/Management, May 1989