



Request for Proposals (RFP)

Scope of Work – Lighthouse Michigan, Strategic Planning Initiative

- **Proposals due by 5pm on September 18, 2026**
- **Join us for an RFP virtual information session on August 27 from 2pm - 3:15pm.**
- **[Join the virtual information session here.](#)**

Project Overview

Lighthouse seeks proposals from qualified consulting firms to facilitate a comprehensive strategic planning process that will establish the organization's direction for the next five years. The selected consultant will engage the Board of Directors, executive leadership, staff, clients, funders and community partners in developing an actionable strategic plan that aligns organizational resources with mission-driven outcomes while positioning Lighthouse for sustainable growth and increased community impact.

The consultant will serve as an objective facilitator and strategic advisor, guiding Lighthouse through an inclusive planning process that evaluates current operations, identifies future opportunities, and establishes a practical implementation roadmap.

Organizational Background

Lighthouse is a leading nonprofit organization serving Oakland County, Michigan, dedicated to building equitable communities that alleviate poverty in partnership with and in service to individuals, families, and organizations. Through a comprehensive continuum of emergency services, housing, economic opportunity, and community development initiatives, Lighthouse works to help individuals move from crisis to long-term stability while addressing the systemic barriers that contribute to poverty.

Lighthouse was established in 2019 through the merger of Lighthouse of Oakland County, founded in 1972, and South Oakland Shelter, founded in 1985. Today, Lighthouse serves as a

trusted community resource, offering emergency food assistance, shelter, rental and utility assistance, housing stability services, affordable housing initiatives, homeownership education and lending programs, youth services, financial empowerment, and community development programs.

Lighthouse's work is guided by six core values:

- Compassion
- Equity
- Collaboration
- Advocacy
- Innovation
- Stewardship

These values shape the organization's commitment to providing client-centered services, fostering strong community partnerships, advocating for systems change, and responsibly stewarding the resources entrusted to the organization. Lighthouse recognizes that sustainable solutions to poverty require collaboration across sectors and meaningful engagement with clients, partners, funders, and the broader community. Through continuous learning and innovation, the organization adapts its programs and services to address emerging needs and close service gaps.

As Lighthouse continues to evolve, the organization seeks to develop a comprehensive Strategic Plan that will guide its priorities over the next five years. The strategic planning process will evaluate the organization's mission, programs, partnerships, operational structure, and organizational capacity to ensure continued alignment with community needs and future opportunities. Particular emphasis will be placed on assessing current and emerging client needs, strengthening community partnerships, evaluating existing and potential lines of business, aligning resources with measurable outcomes, and positioning Lighthouse to serve as an innovative leader in poverty alleviation throughout Oakland County.

The selected consultant will facilitate a collaborative planning process that engages the Board of Directors, executive leadership, staff, clients, funders, and community partners in developing a clear, actionable roadmap for the future. The resulting Strategic Plan will establish organizational priorities, define measurable goals and performance indicators, recommend strategies for organizational growth and sustainability, and provide an implementation framework that supports Lighthouse's mission of building equitable communities where individuals and families have the opportunity to thrive.

Scope of Services

The consultant will facilitate a strategic planning process that includes, but is not limited to, the following components.

1. Organizational Vision and Strategic Direction

The consultant shall facilitate a process to establish organizational alignment around Lighthouse's strategic foundation by:

- Reviewing and validating the organization's mission, vision, and core values.
 - Building consensus among the Board of Directors and leadership regarding Lighthouse's long-term direction and priorities.
 - Conducting an organizational and ecosystem gap analysis to identify strengths, challenges, opportunities, and areas requiring investment.
 - Developing a decision-making framework and decision matrix to evaluate strategic priorities, investments, partnerships, and future initiatives.
 - Ensuring the strategic plan is appropriately scoped, focused, and achievable within the planning horizon.
-

2. Program, Service, and Business Line Assessment

The consultant will conduct a comprehensive assessment of Lighthouse's existing programs, services, and organizational offerings, including:

Center for Working Families

- Evaluate the long-term role of the Center for Working Families.
- Assess which services should remain core organizational functions versus those better delivered through strategic partnerships.

Homeownership Services

- Review current homeownership programming.
- Assess opportunities for expansion, refinement, or redesign based on community needs.

Client Needs Assessment

- Identify both current and emerging client needs using available data and stakeholder engagement.

- Evaluate referral pathways and determine which services should be provided directly versus through community partnerships.
- Assess the effectiveness of existing partnerships in meeting client needs.

Systems Change and Advocacy

- Examine broader systems-level issues affecting Lighthouse clients.
- Identify opportunities to strengthen Lighthouse's advocacy role and community leadership.
- Recommend strategies for aligning advocacy efforts with the organization's mission and strategic priorities.

Innovation and Future Opportunities

Facilitate strategic exploration regarding:

- Lighthouse's potential role as an incubator for new community services and innovative programs.
 - Evaluation of existing lines of business to determine opportunities for:
 - Expansion
 - Refinement
 - Consolidation
 - Discontinuation
 - Development of new service lines
 - Collaboration
 - Identification of governance or operational policies that may need to be developed or revised to support future organizational growth (policy development itself is not required). Special attention should be paid to ensure alignment with [COA accreditation standards](#). This accreditation process is emerging.
-

3. Organizational Capacity and Resource Alignment

The consultant will evaluate organizational capacity and recommend long-term strategies to ensure resources support future implementation priorities.

Areas of assessment shall include:

Organizational Structure

- Staffing capacity
 - Gaps in critical positions or responsibilities
 - Competency gaps

- Organizational design
- Potential reorganization opportunities
- Leadership structure

Human Resources

- Review of existing job descriptions across the organization
- Recommendations for role alignment with strategic priorities across the organization
- Assessment of workforce capacity
- Benchmarking organizational structure with other similarly sized mission-focused organizations

Financial Alignment

- Strategic budget development considerations
- Resource allocation recommendations
- Alignment of financial resources with strategic priorities

Facilities and Space Planning

Assess how Lighthouse can best utilize its physical space by evaluating:

- The role of Lighthouse in placemaking, particularly as it relates to the campus redevelopment project and other residential properties (transitional and permanent)
- Internal operational needs
- Opportunities for shared space with community partners
- Future space requirements based on strategic priorities

4. Stakeholder Engagement and Partnership Strategy

Develop and facilitate an inclusive engagement process that incorporates meaningful input from stakeholders throughout the planning process.

The engagement strategy should include:

- Staff engagement
- Board engagement
- Client engagement
- Community partner engagement
- Funder and stakeholder engagement

The consultant shall also:

- Establish clear feedback loops with internal and external stakeholders.
 - Recommend sustainable approaches for ongoing stakeholder engagement.
 - Ensure community perspectives directly inform strategic priorities and implementation recommendations.
-

5. Organizational Communications and Supporting Resources

Review organizational assets that support long-term future strategic implementation, including:

- Existing communications and marketing collateral.
 - Organizational messaging and positioning.
 - Supporting materials that may require updating to reflect the future strategic direction.
-

6. Performance Measurement and Implementation Planning

Develop a practical future-forward implementation framework that translates strategic priorities into measurable outcomes.

The implementation framework should include:

- Strategic goals and objectives.
 - Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).
 - Organizational and departmental logic models.
 - Organizational performance measures.
 - Evaluation framework for monitoring progress.
 - Recommended implementation timeline.
 - Accountability structure for monitoring strategic plan implementation.
 - Recommended review cycle for measuring progress and updating priorities.
-

Deliverables

At a minimum, the selected consultant shall provide:

- Detailed project work plan.
 - Stakeholder engagement strategy.
 - Environmental scan and organizational assessment.
 - Organizational gap analysis.
 - Decision matrix for evaluating strategic priorities.
 - Program and business line assessment.
 - Resource alignment recommendations.
 - Organizational capacity assessment.
 - Community engagement summary.
 - Draft Strategic Plan.
 - Final Strategic Plan.
 - Strategic implementation roadmap.
 - KPI and evaluation framework.
 - Presentation of findings and recommendations to the Board of Directors.
-

Desired Outcome

Upon completion of this engagement, Lighthouse will have a clear, focused, and actionable Strategic Plan that:

- Aligns mission, vision, values, and organizational priorities.
- Positions Lighthouse to respond to emerging community needs.
- Strengthens strategic partnerships and community engagement.
- Aligns staffing, financial resources, facilities, and organizational capacity with strategic goals.
- Establishes measurable performance indicators and accountability structures.
- Provides a practical roadmap for implementation over the next three to five years while supporting long-term organizational sustainability and community impact.

Consultant Qualifications

The successful consultant should demonstrate:

- Extensive experience leading strategic planning engagements for nonprofit organizations.

- Expertise in organizational development, governance, and change management.
 - Experience evaluating human service organizations and community-based programs.
 - Strong facilitation and consensus-building skills.
 - Experience conducting community engagement processes.
 - The presence of a minimum of at least one team member in Southeast Michigan
 - Knowledge of performance measurement and implementation planning.
-

Proposal Evaluation Criteria

Proposals may be evaluated based on:

Evaluation Criteria	Weight
Organizational Experience and Qualifications	25%
Understanding of the Project and Strategic Approach	20%
Proposed Methodology and Work Plan	25%
Stakeholder Engagement Strategy	20%
Detailed line item cost proposal/cost	10%

Proposal Submission

Proposals must be emailed to Erin Casey at erin@lighthousemi.org by 5pm on September 18th, 2026. Late submissions will not be accepted.

Questions may be emailed to Erin Casey at erin@lighthousemi.org by 5pm on September 3, 2026.

To learn more, please join us for a [virtual information session](#) on August 27 at 2pm.

Timeline

RFP Released	8/17/26
RFP Information Session	8/27/26, 2pm -3:15pm
Deadline for Consultant Questions	9/3/26
Proposal Submission Deadline	9/18/26, 5pm
Proposal Evaluation and Scoring	Week of 9/21/26
Interviews with Top Three Firms	Week of 10/5/26
Consultant Selection	Week of 10/19/26
Contract Award	11/2/26
