

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Strategic Planning Consultant

Blue Ridge Area Coalition for the Homeless (BRACH) & VA-504 Continuum of Care

Proposal Deadline: August 17, 2026

Anticipated Project Period: September 2026 – January 2027

Strategic Planning Period: Three Years

Issuing Organization: Blue Ridge Area Coalition for the Homeless (BRACH)

Continuum of Care: VA-504

I. INTRODUCTION

The Blue Ridge Area Coalition for the Homeless (BRACH), the Continuum of Care (CoC) Lead Agency for the VA-504 Continuum of Care, is seeking proposals from qualified strategic planning consultants or consulting firms to facilitate and develop **two complementary three-year strategic plans**:

1. **A Three-Year Strategic Plan for BRACH**, focused on organizational direction, capacity, governance, operations, partnerships, funding, and sustainability; and
2. **A Three-Year Strategic Plan for the VA-504 Continuum of Care**, focused on strengthening the regional homeless response system and improving outcomes for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

The selected consultant will work closely with BRACH leadership, the Board of Directors, CoC stakeholders, people with lived experience of homelessness, community partners, local governments, service providers, funders, and other key stakeholders.

The two plans should be distinct in purpose while intentionally aligned. The BRACH plan should establish the organizational infrastructure and priorities necessary for BRACH to effectively fulfill its role as CoC Lead Agency, while the CoC plan should establish a shared regional vision and strategy for preventing and ending homelessness across the VA-504 service area.

II. BACKGROUND

BRACH serves as the Continuum of Care Lead Agency for the VA-504 Continuum of Care, which encompasses the City of Charlottesville and the Counties of Albemarle, Fluvanna, Greene, Louisa, and Nelson.

BRACH provides leadership and coordination for the local homeless response system, including Continuum of Care planning, community coordination, data and performance management, funding coordination, system-level strategy, and collaboration among public, nonprofit, and community partners.

The VA-504 Continuum of Care is a diverse regional system that includes local governments, nonprofit service providers, housing organizations, shelters, outreach programs, healthcare and behavioral health partners, community organizations, people with lived experience, and other stakeholders.

BRACH is seeking an experienced strategic planning consultant to help the organization and the broader Continuum move from broad goals and aspirations to **clear priorities, measurable outcomes, defined responsibilities, and realistic implementation strategies over the next three years.**

The selected consultant should understand that strategic planning in a homeless response system is different from developing a traditional organizational strategic plan. The process must account for the complexity of a multi-agency system, differing organizational roles, public-sector responsibilities, funding constraints, federal and state requirements, and the experiences and perspectives of people experiencing homelessness.

III. PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT

The purpose of this engagement is to create **two actionable three-year strategic plans** that provide BRACH and the VA-504 Continuum of Care with clear direction, priorities, and measurable outcomes.

The plans should:

- Establish a clear vision for BRACH and the VA-504 Continuum;
- Identify the most critical challenges and opportunities facing the organization and homeless response system;
- Establish realistic and measurable three-year strategic priorities;
- Clarify organizational and system-level roles and responsibilities;
- Strengthen governance and decision-making;
- Improve coordination among CoC partners;
- Identify opportunities to increase housing and service capacity;
- Strengthen data-driven decision-making and performance management;
- Identify funding, policy, and partnership opportunities;
- Center the perspectives of people with lived experience;
- Establish measurable outcomes and indicators of success; and
- Provide practical implementation roadmaps that can be monitored and adjusted throughout the three-year planning period.

IV. SCOPE OF WORK

The selected consultant will be responsible for designing and facilitating a comprehensive strategic planning process and producing **two separate three-year strategic plans**.

A. Phase 1 – Project Initiation and Discovery

The consultant will meet with BRACH leadership and designated stakeholders to:

- Review existing organizational and Continuum documents;
- Review relevant data and community needs assessments;
- Review previous strategic planning efforts and identify lessons learned;
- Understand current organizational structure and governance;
- Review the VA-504 homeless response system;
- Identify key stakeholders;
- Develop a detailed project timeline and engagement strategy; and
- Finalize the methodology for developing both three-year plans.

B. Phase 2 – Stakeholder Engagement

The consultant will develop and facilitate an inclusive stakeholder engagement process.

Stakeholder engagement should include, as appropriate:

- BRACH Board of Directors;
- BRACH staff;
- CoC committees and workgroups;
- Homeless service providers;
- Shelter and housing providers;
- Local government representatives;
- Healthcare and behavioral health partners;
- Affordable housing partners;
- Philanthropic and community partners;
- Funders;
- Faith and community-based organizations;
- People with current or past lived experience of homelessness; and
- Other stakeholders identified during the planning process.

The consultant should recommend an appropriate combination of:

- Individual interviews;

- Focus groups;
- Surveys;
- Stakeholder meetings;
- Board and leadership retreats;
- Community listening sessions; and
- Data-informed planning sessions.

The engagement process should intentionally create opportunities for candid feedback and should not rely solely on input from organizational leadership.

V. BRACH THREE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

The first final product will be a **three-year strategic plan for BRACH**.

The BRACH plan should establish the organization's priorities for the three-year planning period and address, at minimum:

1. Mission, Vision, and Organizational Identity

- Mission and vision;
- Organizational values;
- BRACH's role as the CoC Lead Agency;
- Organizational identity and positioning; and
- Role within the broader community.

2. Governance

- Board roles and responsibilities;
- Board effectiveness and engagement;
- Governance structure;
- Committee structure;
- Decision-making processes; and
- Relationship between governance and operations.

3. Organizational Capacity

- Staffing structure;
- Leadership capacity;
- Organizational infrastructure;
- Administrative capacity;
- Technology and data capacity;
- Professional development; and
- Organizational sustainability.

4. Continuum of Care Leadership

- BRACH's role in coordinating the CoC;
- Relationship between BRACH and CoC stakeholders;
- System-level leadership;
- Communication and coordination;
- Accountability mechanisms; and
- Clarification of organizational and system roles.

5. Financial Sustainability

- Diversification of revenue;
- Federal, state, local, and philanthropic funding;
- Fund development;
- Grant strategy;
- Long-term financial sustainability; and
- Opportunities for organizational investment.

6. Data and Performance

- HMIS and data strategy;
- System performance measurement;
- Use of data for decision-making;
- Community reporting;
- Data quality; and
- Evaluation and continuous improvement.

7. Partnerships and Community Engagement

- Public-sector partnerships;
- Nonprofit partnerships;
- Housing and healthcare partnerships;
- Community engagement;
- Advocacy and education; and
- Stakeholder communication.

8. Three-Year Strategic Priorities

The consultant will identify a manageable number of organizational priorities for the three-year planning period, each with:

- Specific objectives;
- Strategies;
- Measurable outcomes;
- Key performance indicators;

- Responsible parties;
 - Annual or quarterly milestones;
 - Target timelines; and
 - Resource considerations.
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VI. VA-504 CONTINUUM OF CARE THREE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

The second final product will be a **three-year strategic plan for the VA-504 Continuum of Care**.

The CoC plan should address the homeless response system as a whole and should not simply duplicate the BRACH organizational plan.

Areas of consideration should include:

1. System Vision and Shared Outcomes

- Shared vision for preventing and ending homelessness;
- Definition of system-level success;
- Community-wide outcomes; and
- Shared accountability.

2. Homelessness Prevention and Diversion

- Prevention strategies;
- Housing problem-solving;
- Diversion;
- Eviction prevention partnerships;
- Identification of households at greatest risk; and
- Strategies to reduce inflow into homelessness.

3. Outreach and Engagement

- Street outreach;
- Engagement with unsheltered individuals;
- Coordinated outreach strategies;
- Encampment response coordination;
- Outreach data and performance; and
- Connections to housing and supportive services.

4. Emergency Shelter and Crisis Response

- Emergency shelter capacity;

- Low-barrier shelter;
- Seasonal shelter;
- Temporary emergency shelter;
- Shelter standards and coordination;
- Shelter diversion; and
- Connections from shelter to permanent housing.

5. Permanent Housing

- Rapid Re-Housing;
- Permanent Supportive Housing;
- Affordable housing partnerships;
- Landlord engagement;
- Housing navigation;
- Housing retention; and
- Increasing housing opportunities for people experiencing homelessness.

6. Coordinated Entry

- Access to the homeless response system;
- Assessment and prioritization;
- By-Name List practices;
- Referral processes;
- System navigation;
- Equity and accessibility; and
- Coordination among participating agencies.

7. Data and System Performance

The plan should establish three-year strategies to improve:

- HMIS participation and data quality;
- System performance measures;
- Length of time homeless;
- Returns to homelessness;
- Housing placement;
- Housing retention;
- Successful exits;
- Unsheltered homelessness; and
- Other relevant HUD and community measures.

8. Equity and Lived Experience

The plan should meaningfully incorporate:

- Racial and socioeconomic equity;
- Accessibility;
- The experiences of people with lived experience;
- Client voice in system design;
- Barriers to accessing services; and
- Strategies to reduce disparities in homelessness and housing outcomes.

9. Cross-System Partnerships

The plan should consider opportunities to strengthen partnerships with:

- Local governments;
- Housing authorities;
- Affordable housing developers;
- Healthcare systems;
- Behavioral health providers;
- Workforce development organizations;
- Schools and educational institutions;
- Criminal legal system partners;
- Faith-based organizations;
- Philanthropy; and
- Other community partners.

10. Policy and Funding Environment

The consultant should assess relevant federal, state, and local policy and funding trends and identify opportunities and risks that may affect the VA-504 system during the three-year planning period.

VII. THREE-YEAR IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

Both plans must include a **three-year implementation framework**.

The final plans should not simply identify goals. Each strategic priority should include:

Strategic Priority	What must change?
Goal	What outcome are we seeking?
Objectives	What specifically must be accomplished?
Strategies	How will we accomplish it?

Key Actions	What needs to happen?
Lead Party	Who is responsible?
Partners	Who must participate?
Year 1 Milestones	What should occur during Year 1?
Year 2 Milestones	What should occur during Year 2?
Year 3 Milestones	What should occur during Year 3?
Metrics	How will success be measured?
Resources	What funding/capacity is required?
Risks	What could prevent implementation?

The consultant should recommend a practical process for monitoring implementation, evaluating progress annually, and making adjustments as community conditions, funding, policies, and system needs change.

VIII. REQUIRED DELIVERABLES

The selected consultant will be expected to produce, at minimum:

Deliverable 1: Project Work Plan

A detailed work plan, timeline, stakeholder engagement strategy, and methodology.

Deliverable 2: Organizational Assessment

A concise assessment of BRACH's current organizational strengths, challenges, opportunities, and capacity needs.

Deliverable 3: CoC/System Assessment

A concise assessment of the VA-504 homeless response system, including strengths, gaps, opportunities, and system-level challenges.

Deliverable 4: Stakeholder Engagement Summary

A summary of stakeholder engagement, key themes, areas of consensus, areas of disagreement, and major findings.

Deliverable 5: BRACH Three-Year Strategic Plan

A professionally designed three-year organizational strategic plan with a detailed implementation framework.

Deliverable 6: VA-504 CoC Three-Year Strategic Plan

A professionally designed three-year Continuum of Care strategic plan with a detailed implementation framework.

Deliverable 7: Implementation Dashboard

A practical dashboard or monitoring framework that allows BRACH leadership and CoC stakeholders to track progress throughout the three-year planning period.

Deliverable 8: Final Presentation

A presentation of both plans to the BRACH Board of Directors and appropriate Continuum of Care stakeholders.

IX. CONSULTANT QUALIFICATIONS

BRACH is seeking an individual consultant or consulting firm with demonstrated experience in strategic planning and community-based systems work.

Preference will be given to consultants with experience in:

- Homelessness and housing systems;
- Continuums of Care;
- HUD-funded programs;
- Nonprofit organizations;
- Community-based strategic planning;
- Multi-stakeholder environments;
- Organizational development;
- Governance;
- Data-informed planning;
- Facilitation;
- Systems change; and
- Implementation planning.

The ideal consultant will demonstrate the ability to balance **organizational strategy with systems-level strategy** and to facilitate productive conversations among stakeholders with different perspectives and responsibilities.

X. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Proposals should be concise and should include the following:

1. Cover Letter

Introduce the consultant or consulting firm and summarize interest in the project.

2. Organizational/Consultant Qualifications

Provide relevant experience, particularly with homelessness, housing, Continuums of Care, nonprofit organizations, or complex community systems.

3. Proposed Approach

Describe the proposed methodology for developing both three-year strategic plans.

Please specifically address how the consultant will:

- Engage stakeholders;
- Incorporate lived experience;
- Analyze organizational and system data;
- Facilitate difficult or competing perspectives;
- Distinguish the BRACH plan from the CoC plan; and
- Translate recommendations into an actionable three-year implementation framework.

4. Project Timeline

Provide a proposed timeline from project initiation through final plan approval.

5. Deliverables

Identify proposed deliverables and explain how they will meet the goals of this RFP.

6. Relevant Work Samples

Provide examples of comparable strategic plans or related work.

7. References

Provide at least three professional references for comparable projects.

8. Project Team

Identify the individuals who will perform the work and describe their roles and qualifications.

9. Budget and Fee Structure

Provide a detailed project budget, including:

- Total project cost;
- Consultant fees;
- Estimated hours;
- Travel expenses, if applicable;
- Facilitation expenses;
- Materials or other anticipated expenses; and
- Any additional costs.

Proposals should clearly identify whether expenses are included in the proposed fee or billed separately.

XI. PROPOSED TIMELINE

BRACH anticipates the following schedule:

Activity	Date
RFP Issued	August 3, 2026
Deadline for Questions	August 10, 2026
Responses to Questions	August 12, 2026
Proposal Deadline	August 17, 2026
Proposal Review	August 18–21, 2026
Consultant Selected	August 24, 2026
Contract Negotiation/Execution	August 24–28, 2026
Project Initiation	September 2026
Discovery & Stakeholder Engagement	September–October 2026
Strategic Planning & Drafting	November–December 2026
Draft Plans	December 2026

Review & Revision	December 2026–January 2027
Final Plans	January 2027
Final Presentation	January 2027

The resulting strategic plans will cover a three-year period following their adoption.

BRACH reserves the right to modify this timeline as necessary.

XII. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria:

Criterion	Weight
Relevant strategic planning experience	20%
Experience with homelessness/housing systems and/or Continuums of Care	20%
Proposed methodology and approach	20%
Stakeholder engagement and facilitation strategy	15%
Quality and feasibility of three-year implementation framework	10%
Qualifications and experience of project team	5%
Budget and overall value	10%
Total	100%

BRACH may request interviews or presentations from finalists before making a final selection.

XIII. QUESTIONS AND SUBMISSION

Questions regarding this RFP should be submitted in writing to:

Shayla Washington
Executive Director
Blue Ridge Area Coalition for the Homeless (BRACH)

Proposal Submission Deadline:
August 17, 2026

Proposals should be submitted electronically in PDF format.

Submission Email: [Insert email address]

Subject Line: VA-504 Strategic Planning Consultant RFP – [Consultant/Firm Name]

XIV. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

BRACH reserves the right to:

- Reject any or all proposals;
- Request clarification or additional information from proposers;
- Modify the scope of work;
- Negotiate with one or more proposers;
- Cancel or postpone the RFP process;
- Select a proposal that BRACH determines provides the best overall value; and
- Award the contract to a consultant or firm whose proposal is not necessarily the lowest cost.

Submission of a proposal does not guarantee selection or contract award.

The selected consultant will be required to enter into a written agreement with BRACH outlining the final scope of work, deliverables, timeline, compensation, confidentiality requirements, and other applicable terms.

XV. DESIRED OUTCOME

At the conclusion of this engagement, BRACH and the VA-504 Continuum of Care should have **two complementary, practical, and measurable three-year strategic plans** that provide a clear roadmap for organizational and system-level priorities.

The BRACH plan should answer:

What does BRACH need to become and do over the next three years to effectively lead the Continuum of Care and fulfill its organizational mission?

The VA-504 Continuum of Care plan should answer:

What must our community collectively do over the next three years to strengthen the homeless response system and measurably reduce and ultimately end homelessness across the VA-504 region?

The selected consultant will help BRACH and its partners move beyond planning as an exercise and toward **shared priorities, clear accountability, measurable outcomes, and sustained implementation over a defined three-year period.**