

Opioid RFP Questions and Responses

Note: Similar questions were consolidated into one response

1. What is the County's timeline for selection of a vendor to provide strategic planning services?

The Cabarrus Opioid Review Team will convene the third week in September. The selection process will be swift with the goal of identifying a firm by month's end. The goal is to notify the selected firm by late September or early October.

2. We understand that the work is to "commence by calendar year's end, leading to a viable 3–5-year funding plan." What is the County's requested timeline for this work to be completed?

We anticipate having a funding plan prepared and ready to implement no later than July 2024 (beginning of FY25).

3. Is the county open to extending the timeline to ensure robust community engagement efforts are possible?

Should more time be needed, extensions will be considered. However, the hope is to have the strategic plan approved and ready to implement by July 2024.

4. Does the County have a budget allocated to this project? If so, can the County please provide additional information on the budget amount?

No specific or maximum amount has been allocated or planned. The Cabarrus Opioid Review Team will consider the prospective firm's budget during the review process.

5. Who is responsible for the evaluation of this opportunity?

The Cabarrus Opioid Review Team will be led by the Cabarrus County Behavioral Health Director. Other members of the review team include representatives from Cabarrus County Human Services, Cabarrus Health Alliance, Cabarrus County Emergency Medical Services (EMS), and the Cabarrus County Sheriff's Office.

6. How many county staff will participate in the planning process?

See Response 5 for the composition of the review team. This team will remain involved throughout the planning process. Other County staff members may be involved, depending on the activity.

7. The collaborative strategic planning process attachment under section 2.c states, as part of the activity, “build upon any related planning” (item C). Can the county provide additional information on prior or concurrent planning efforts in relation to addiction, similar issues, or community health assessments conducted within the County?

To date, the only allocation of Cabarrus’ NC Opioid Settlement funds was a small amount (roughly \$70,000) to match grant funding, supporting existing harm reduction programs administered by Cabarrus Health Alliance. The funding was used to support services/programs that fall under Option A, Strategy 7 (Naloxone Distribution) and Option A, Strategy 9 (Syringe Service Program). No other opioid settlement funding has been allocated to date for prevention, treatment, or recovery programs in Cabarrus. Findings from the 2020 Community Needs Assessment conducted by the Cabarrus Health Alliance (Cabarrus’ local health department) is available [here](#).

8. Can you clarify the vendor’s role in “building upon any related planning”, such as the expected scope required of the vendor to perform this activity in coordination with other efforts?

Submissions are encouraged to incorporate suggested activities outlined by the NC Memorandum of Agreement regarding the collaborative strategic planning process. Also, while engaging community partners and stakeholders, the identified firm should have a good understanding of existing services and programs in Cabarrus that are addressing the opioid epidemic and a general sense of needed services.

9. The Opioid Settlement allows a County to choose Option A or Option B. Has Cabarrus County decided about which option it is interested in pursuing or will that be decided by the Strategic Planning Process?

To date, no decisions have been made regarding strategies (other than a small amount of funding that has already been distributed, supporting existing Strategy 7 and Strategy 9 programs).

10. The collaborative strategic planning process attachment under section 2.c states, as part of the activity, “identify organizations” (item L). Is the selected vendor expected to work with and/or coordinate with identified organizations to develop implementation strategies related to opioid settlement funding for these organizations? Similarly, is the

selected vendor expected to work with those identified organizations to co-create and/or "develop budgets and timelines" (item M)?

The primary role of the identified firm is to help create a strategic funding plan for Cabarrus County in collaboration with the Cabarrus County Review Team. Once a plan has been developed and approved by Cabarrus' governing body, the RFP process will be used to identify prospective providers to implement each approved strategy. It will be determined later how or whether the firm will be involved on an ongoing basis after the strategic funding plan has been developed and approved.

11. What information about references are required—such as: name, email, description/scope of work?

Yes. Name, email, description of services and/or scope of work. Also, please include the period during which the firm worked with each reference.

12. When responses are submitted and become property of the County, are those responses confidential or do they become public? Are we able to mark our submission or parts of our submission as confidential?

Yes, responses become the property of Cabarrus County. Submissions will not be posted publicly. Parts of submissions can be marked confidential, but please explain how or why the information is confidential or considered a trade secret.

13. Is there potential for a budgeted stipend for engaging the community and/or individuals with lived experience?

An approach that would offer small stipends to Cabarrus residents with lived experience may be considered.

14. Will the agency accept experience with other state governments in place of NC?

Yes, although preference may be given to firms that have worked with NC governmental agencies.

15. The RFP noted some items that would be evaluated but did not specify the scoring criteria framework, weighting, and methodology used to score proposals. Can you provide more clarity on this?

Submissions will be evaluated based on the following criteria: a) experience performing similar projects for governmental agencies; b) knowledge of the NC Opioid Settlement and accompanying Memorandum of Agreement; c) knowledge of Cabarrus County and

potential gaps and needs in the community around opioid use and dependence; d) ability to meet the proposed deadlines; e) ability to execute the project in a fiscally responsible manner (i.e., operating within budget); f) ability to engage a diverse array of stakeholders, partners, and community members; and g) description of deliverables and performance indicators. A scoring tool will be provided to each member of the Cabarrus Opioid Review Team for use. Each criterion holds equal weight.

16. How would the agency like vendors to demonstrate they meet the below evaluation criteria within the proposal?

This question was about complying with County, State and Federal requirements. The selected firm must be in good standing if a contracted provider with/for a governmental agency and be able to comply with Cabarrus County's contracting requirements. This will include becoming a contracted provider with Cabarrus County and using the County's payment system for reimbursement.

17. To be respectful of working within the allocated budget for Cabarrus County, does the county wish for engagements with the leadership team and/or community partners and stakeholders to be in person, virtual, or a combination of both? If any are in person, how many onsite engagements do you desire? For engagements, whether virtual or in-person/on-site, can you please specify the structure you prefer (interviews, focus groups, surveys, combination of all, etc.)?

We anticipate use of any or all methods outlined above: surveys, interviews, focus groups, virtual and in-person sessions. When available and appropriate, County facilities may be used to hold in-person meetings and forums.

18. Are there additional stakeholder groups unique to Cabarrus County that you want us to include that were not outlined as stakeholders in the NC MOA Collaborative Strategic Planning Framework List? If so, can you please identify those for us so we know how many groups we might be engaging?

We anticipate that some stakeholders that should be part of the process will come to light as the collaborative strategic planning process unfolds. To begin, we anticipate that stakeholders and community partners including, but not limited to, the following agencies or groups will be included: Cabarrus County Human Services, other Cabarrus County departments, Cabarrus Sheriff's Office, Cabarrus County District Attorney's Office, Cabarrus County Emergency Medical Services (EMS), Cabarrus Health Alliance, local healthcare systems, publicly funded health plans, Kannapolis City Schools, Cabarrus County Schools, youth organizations, local substance use providers, Cabarrus' Mental

Health Advisory Board, the Healthy Cabarrus Substance Use Coalition, and the Cabarrus Crisis Collaborative (managed by Partners Health Management).

19. Understanding the Cabarrus County uses the Stepping Up program and partners with Daymark Recovery Services, does the County plan to enhance MAT services in the Jail? What is the current state of MAT within the County?

Currently, Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) is offered through a few community-based substance use providers and medical practices. MAT is not currently offered in the Cabarrus County Detention Center (Jail).

20. Does Cabarrus County Plan to participate in Drug Court models in the future?

Should development of drug treatment court models be a strategy identified as a need in Cabarrus County, we would work with the judicial system and partners to assess the need further.

21. To what extent will the county facilitate access to existing data that may be used for planning purposes (e.g., indicator data from state/county/city agencies; demographic, economic, social, and environmental factors)?

Current data is available through the [NC Opioid and Substance Use Action Plan Data Dashboard](#) (filter by county). Further, more data may be available to the selected firm.