

BACKGROUND

The Bridge Homeless Recovery Center, located in the heart of downtown Dallas, is a “one-stop-shop” for adults experiencing homelessness in the Dallas area. The Bridge is open 24 hours daily to offer basic needs services, along with access to healthcare, income alternatives, and long-term housing. This “one-stop” approach means that when people need help, they don’t have to find transportation to make multiple visits to several agencies to find assistance; nearly all of the services a person may need to get on the path to permanent housing is in one place. The Bridge serves as the backbone for the delivery of services to the unhoused population in Dallas and six surrounding counties, playing a significant role in the North Texas continuum of care for homeless recovery services. The Bridge is the lead partner of the City of Dallas and State of Texas in supporting this population. Annually, the Bridge serves 85% of the homeless population of Dallas County—nearly 7,000 individuals a year.



CHALLENGE

The Bridge was historically awarded a Management Services Contract from the City of Dallas to operate the shelter; however, the process was shifted from a vendor agreement to a competitive process for 2022. Since the opening of homeless recovery center in 2008, The Bridge has served as the primary partner contracted with the City of Dallas to address homelessness. Through the years, the staff of The Bridge have successfully secured the contract each year due to their excellence in service and a strong relationship with The City of Dallas and the Office of Homeless Solutions.

While the partnership has been advantageous for both the City and The Bridge, The Bridge needed support to write a competitive proposal in a short period of time.



OUTCOME

When the RFP was published, The Bridge contracted with Colton Strawser Consulting to submit an application. After meeting with the staff and touring the campus, Colton developed a plan and proposal in response to the City's RFP. Rebecca Cox, Chief Services Officer at The Bridge, said of the Colton Strawser Consulting approach, "I was really impressed by how immersed Colton became in our organization. It felt like he almost became a part of our team." That deep dive approach to understanding the organization in its entirety is what makes Colton Strawser Consulting an excellent partner in the program development and proposal phase of grant applications.

In an unprecedented move, the City Council voted unanimously to approve the contract with The Bridge for more than \$4.5 million each year for five years. As Amy Jane, the interim Chief Development Officer said, "The work of The Bridge is being recognized in the community and that we have a multi-year contract with the City of Dallas is an acknowledgment of our capacity to hold the focus on our mission, empower adults experiencing homelessness in Dallas with the tools to homeless recovery as they move into sustainable housing." The work of The Bridge and the relationships the staff has forged in the Dallas community were the pillars on which this contract stands, but Jane continued, "I want to underscore my gratitude to Colton for the vital and essential work he performed in crafting the competitive proposal in response to the city's RFP. We could not have done this without him."



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If your organization is ready to take the next step in expanding or strengthening your services by applying for federal grants, Colton Strawser Consulting is here to help. Visit us online to schedule a 30-minute consultation and our federal grant readiness assessment.

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