



**CENTRAL TORONTO YOUTH SERVICES
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
Strategic Planning Consultant**

Posting Date: September 1st, 2026
Deadline for Submission: September 22nd, 2026

1. INTRODUCTION

Central Toronto Youth Services (CTYS) is seeking proposals from qualified and experienced consultants or consulting firms to support the development of a new strategic plan that will guide the organization's priorities, direction and decision-making over the next five years.

The selected consultant/consultant firm will provide strategic expertise and skilled facilitation to support a meaningful, equity-informed and forward-looking planning process. This will include working collaboratively with the Board of Directors, senior leadership, staff, youth, families, community partners and other key stakeholders throughout the process, as appropriate.

2. ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

CTYS is a community-based, accredited Children's Mental Health Centre serving youth and families in Toronto, committed to building the strength and resiliency of young people in ways that are engaging, respectful and empowering.

CTYS provides a range of services that respond to diverse needs and challenges experienced by young people, including mental health concerns, involvement with the justice system, emotional and behavioural challenges, and issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity. In the 2024–2025 fiscal year, CTYS served 1,016 clients. Services are provided across Toronto, including Etobicoke, North York, Toronto and East York, Scarborough and surrounding communities, as well as Vaughan. Our services include individual, group and family counselling and outreach.

Through its programs and partnerships, CTYS works with youth, families and community partners to promote improved mental health, wellbeing, connection and positive outcomes for young people and their families. Additional information about CTYS, including its programs, services and organizational context, is available through the [CTYS website](#).

3. PURPOSE

The purpose of this engagement is to develop a clear, compelling and actionable strategic plan that will guide CTYS's priorities, direction and decision-making for the next five years. The strategic planning process should enable CTYS to:

- assess the current organizational position and operating environment inclusive of industry and funder trends;
- understand emerging needs and priorities of youth and families;
- identify opportunities and challenges within the broader child and youth mental health sector;
- clarify CTYS's future strategic position, role and contribution in the sector;
- identify a focused and achievable set of strategic priorities for the next five years clearly linked to the outlined opportunities and challenges;
- assess organizational capacity, resources and capabilities required to achieve those priorities;
- consider financial and organizational sustainability;
- identify opportunities for innovation, collaboration, partnerships and service development;
- incorporate an equity informed lens throughout the planning process; and
- establish a practical framework for implementation, accountability and measurement.

4. STRATEGIC PLANNING CONTEXT

CTYS operates in an increasingly complex and evolving child and youth mental health environment. With its previous strategic plan concluding in 2025, CTYS is undertaking this planning process at a time of continued change in the youth and transitional age mental health landscape. The process provides an opportunity to reflect on progress and lessons learned, understand emerging needs and opportunities, and consider CTYS's future role, partnerships and organizational priorities within the broader child and youth mental health system. It will also be important to establish a clear review process that allows for CTYS to pivot and adapt the strategic plan as may require through the five years.

The strategic planning process should consider, as appropriate:

- changing mental health and wellbeing needs of youth and families;
- changes in the children's and youth mental health service system;
- provincial and local policy, system and funding priorities;

- opportunities and challenges associated with government and community partnerships;
- financial sustainability, funding opportunities, opportunities for integration and potential pressures;
- workforce recruitment, retention, development and organizational capacity;
- changing approaches to service delivery;
- technology, data and information management;
- opportunities for collaboration, integration and system-level partnerships;
- equity and access to services;
- the experiences and perspectives of youth and families; and
- emerging trends and opportunities that may affect CTYS over the life of the strategic plan.

The successful consultant will be expected to bring relevant expertise and current environmental knowledge to the planning process while ensuring that the strategy is grounded in CTYS's organizational context.

5. DESIRED OUTCOMES

At the conclusion of the engagement, CTYS expects to have:

1. A final strategic plan suitable for approval by the Board of Directors and communication to staff, youth, families, partners, funders and stakeholders. The plan should articulate a clear vision for the next five years.
2. A refined or reaffirmed vision, mission and organizational values, where appropriate.
3. A focused set of strategic priorities that reflects the organization's greatest opportunities and challenges.
4. Clear strategic objectives and desired outcomes associated with each priority that are both meaningful and achievable.
5. An understanding of the organizational and financial implications of implementing the strategy.
6. Meaningful input from youth, families, staff, leadership, Board members, partners and other key stakeholders. The approach should be accessible, inclusive and

responsive to the needs and circumstances of the different stakeholder groups and provide meaningful opportunities for input into the planning process.

7. A practical implementation framework that allows for flexibility and adaptability as the plan is being executed.
8. A proposed approach that is adaptable to support the monitoring, evaluation and reporting of strategic progress including key performance indicators for each strategic priority.

6. SCOPE OF SERVICES

The successful consultant will be responsible for designing and facilitating a comprehensive strategic planning process.

CTYS will provide the successful consultant with relevant existing organizational information and materials, including reports, financial and workforce information, program and service data, performance information, and government and community engagement materials. The consultant will be expected to draw on this information and identify additional analysis required to inform the strategic plan.

7. DELIVERABLES

The following deliverables represent the anticipated outputs of the engagement. Proponents may recommend alternative formats or sequencing where they can demonstrate that the proposed approach will achieve the desired outcomes.:

1. Project Plan and Critical Path

A detailed project plan outlining activities, timelines, milestones, responsibilities and deliverables.

2. Stakeholder Engagement Plan

A plan identifying stakeholder groups, engagement methods, timing, accessibility considerations and intended outcomes.

3. Environmental Scan

A concise report with an assessment of relevant external trends, opportunities, risks, systems changes and implications for CTYS, supported by relevant and credible sources

The consultant will synthesize stakeholder input and demonstrate how key themes and perspectives inform the development of the strategic plan

4. Strategic Planning Findings

A summary of key themes emerging from internal and external research and stakeholder engagement, including their potential implications for CTYS.

5. Strategic Direction

A proposed strategic direction, including CTYS's vision, mission, values where appropriate; with a focused set of strategic priorities, objectives, desired outcomes and measures of success.

6. Five-Year Strategic Plan

A clear, concise and actionable strategic plan for the next five years, reflecting the approved strategic direction and priorities.

7. Implementation Framework

A practical framework linking strategic priorities to actions, timelines, accountability, resources and measures.

8. Measurement and Evaluation Framework

Recommended indicators and mechanisms for monitoring progress and reporting to the Board and other stakeholders on a quarterly and annual basis.

9. Final Presentation

A presentation of the final strategic plan, key recommendations and implementation framework to the Board of Directors and/or other designated stakeholders.

10. Stakeholder Summary

A concise, accessible summary suitable for communication to staff, youth, families, community partners, funders and other stakeholders.

8. PROJECT GOVERNANCE

The successful consultant will work primarily the CTYS Strategic Planning Steering Committee, which will serve as the primary point of contact throughout the engagement.

The Steering Committee will provide guidance and feedback throughout the process and support access to relevant information, staff and other stakeholders.

The consultant will be expected to provide regular progress updates to the Steering Committee and promptly identify any issues that may affect the project timeline, scope, budget or deliverables.

9. CONSULTANT QUALIFICATIONS

CTYS is seeking an individual consultant or consulting firm with demonstrated expertise in strategic planning and experience supporting organizations through complex planning and change processes.

Proponents must demonstrate:

- experience leading strategic planning processes;
- experience with health, mental health, social services, children's/youth services or related sectors;
- experience working with non-profit and/or publicly funded organizations;
- ability to facilitate discussions with Board of Directors and senior leadership and stakeholder groups;
- experience engaging youth and/or families in meaningful and accessible planning processes;
- knowledge of equity, inclusion and anti-oppressive practice;
- experience with organizational transformation, change and strategic decision-making;
- experience addressing organizational and financial sustainability;
- strong research, analytical, facilitation and communication skills; and
- demonstrated ability to translate strategic thinking into practical implementation plans and measurable outcomes.

10. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Proposals will not exceed 12 pages (NOT including bios and appendices) and should include the following:

A. Cover Letter

A brief introduction to the consultant/firm and confirmation of interest in the project.

B. Understanding of CTYS and the Assignment

An explanation of the proponent's understanding of CTYS, the purpose and context of the engagement, and the key opportunities and considerations they believe should inform the strategic planning process.

C. Proposed Methodology

A detailed description of the proposed approach, including:

- project initiation and governance;
- environmental scan and analysis;
- Internal organizational assessment;
- stakeholder engagement, including meaningful engagement of youth, young adults and families;
- integration of equity-informed and anti-oppressive approaches;
- Synthesis of findings and strategic priority development;
- engagement of the Board, senior leadership and other key stakeholders;
- approach to monitoring and measurement; and
- any other methods or approaches the proponent considers relevant to achieving the desired outcomes.

D. Use of Artificial Intelligence and Technology

Proponents should identify whether and how artificial intelligence or other emerging technologies will be used in delivering the engagement, including any intended use in research, analysis, stakeholder engagement, drafting or other project activities.

Proponents should describe the measures that will be used to protect confidential, personal or otherwise sensitive CTYS information and maintain the integrity and accuracy of project deliverables

E. Project Timeline and Critical Path

A proposed timeline identifying major activities, milestones and deliverables.

F. Project Team

Names, roles, qualifications and relevant experience of all individuals who will work on the project. Proponents should identify the proposed project lead and clearly describe the role and level of involvement of each team member.

G. Relevant Experience

Provide at least three examples of comparable strategic planning engagements completed or substantially completed within the past five years.

Examples should identify:

- client/organization;
- nature and scope of the assignment;
- consultant's role;
- project duration; and
- key outcomes/deliverables.

Where possible, examples should demonstrate experience with organizations of similar size, complexity, mandate or funding environment.

H. References

Provide a minimum of three client references for sector comparable work including:

Organization/Client
Contact Name/Title
Email
Phone
Nature of Engagement
Date(s)

I. Resources Required from CTYS

Identify the information, staff time/participation, facilities, technology and other resources required from CTYS to successfully complete the engagement.

J. Budget and Fee Proposal

Provide a detailed fee proposal including:

- professional fees;
- anticipated expenses;

- applicable taxes;
- Total proposed contract value;
- proposed payment schedule; and
- any assumptions or exclusions.

K. Conflict of Interest

Proponents must declare any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest that exists or could arise in relation to this engagement.

The nature of any conflict will be reviewed by CTYS and will not necessarily result in exclusion from consideration.

L. Outsourcing

Proponents must disclose if they will be outsourcing any components of the work and to whom. If so, and identify the proposed subcontractor(s), their role and relevant qualifications.

CTYS may invite shortlisted proponents to participate in an interview or presentation before a final selection is made.

CTYS reserves the right to request clarification or additional information from proponents as part of the evaluation process.

12. PROJECT BUDGET

CTYS anticipates awarding a contract within the range of **\$30,000 to \$45,000**. Cost will be an important evaluation factor, and proponents should provide a clear breakdown of fees and expenses. Proposals should demonstrate how the proposed approach achieves the project objectives within the available budget.

13. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Proposals must be submitted electronically by Tuesday, September 22nd, 2026:

Central Toronto Youth Services

mail@ctys.org

Attention: CTYS Strategic Planning Committee

Late submissions may not be considered.

14. CONFIDENTIALITY

The successful consultant will be required to maintain the confidentiality of information accessed through the course of the engagement and comply with all applicable CTYS policies and requirements regarding confidentiality, privacy and information security.

Any reports, documents, data or other materials provided by CTYS for the purpose of this engagement must be treated as confidential unless otherwise authorized.

The consultant will be responsible for ensuring that information provided by CTYS is appropriately protected when using any third-party platforms, software, artificial intelligence tools or other technologies in connection with the engagement.

15. OWNERSHIP OF WORK

All final reports, strategic planning materials, frameworks, tools and other deliverables developed specifically for CTYS as part of this engagement will become the property of CTYS upon completion and payment for the services, subject to any pre-existing intellectual property of the consultant.

16. CONTACT INFORMATION

Questions regarding this RFP should be directed to:

Zoë Cunningham
Manager, Corporate Services
Central Toronto Youth Services
zoe.cunningham@ctys.org

RFP also available on our website www.ctys.org

Appendix A – Proposal Submission Template

Proponents should use the following structure when preparing their proposal. Responses should be clearly labelled and should address all applicable requirements identified in the RFP.

RFP Title: Strategic Planning Consultant

Submission Deadline: Tuesday, September 22nd, 2026

Submission Contact: Zoë Cunningham, Manager, Corporate Services

A. PROPONENT INFORMATION

Information	Proponent Response
Legal name of consultant/firm	
Operating/business name, if different	
Primary contact	
Title	
Email	
Telephone	
Mailing address	
Website	
Business structure (e.g., corporation, partnership, individual consultant)	
HST/GST registration number, if applicable	

Proposed Project Lead

Information	Proponent Response
Name	
Title/Role	
Email	

Telephone	
-----------	--

B. PROPOSAL RESPONSE

1. Cover Letter

Provide a brief introduction to the consultant/firm and confirmation of interest in the assignment.

Response:

2. Understanding of CTYS and the Assignment

Describe your understanding of CTYS, the purpose and context of the engagement, and the key opportunities and considerations that should inform the strategic planning process.

Response:

3. Proposed Methodology

Describe your proposed approach to the strategic planning engagement.

Response:

4. Use of Artificial Intelligence and Technology

Identify whether and how artificial intelligence or other emerging technologies will be used and describe the measures that will be used to protect confidential, personal or otherwise sensitive CTYS information and maintain the integrity and accuracy of project deliverables.

Response:

5. Project Timeline

Provide a proposed timeline identifying major activities, milestones, deliverables and key decision points.

Response:

6. Project Team

Identify the proposed project lead and all individuals who will work on the engagement, including their roles, qualifications and relevant experience. Clearly describe the role and level of involvement of each team member.

7. Relevant Experience

Provide at least three examples of comparable strategic planning engagements completed or substantially completed within the past five years.

Response:

Example #1:

Example #2:

Example #3:

8. References

Provide a minimum of three client references for comparable strategic planning engagements.

Information	Reference 1	Reference 2	Reference 3
Organization			
Contact name			
Title			
Email			
Telephone			
Nature of engagement			
Dates of engagement			

9. Resources Required from CTYS

Identify the information, staff participation, meeting time, facilities, technology and other resources required from CTYS to successfully complete the engagement.

Response:

10. Budget and Fee Proposal

Provide a detailed fee proposal including:

Cost Item	Proposed Cost
Professional fees	
Anticipated expenses	
Applicable taxes	
Total proposed contract value	
Proposed payment schedule	

11. Conflict of Interest

Declare any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest that exists or could arise in relation to this engagement.

Response:

12. Outsourcing

Indicate whether any component of the work will be subcontracted or outsourced.

☐ No

☐ Yes

If yes, identify the proposed subcontractor(s), their role and relevant qualifications.

Subcontractor	Role	Relevant Qualifications/Experience

C. PROPONENT DECLARATION

I/We certify that the information provided in this proposal is accurate and complete to the best of my/our knowledge and that I/we have the authority to submit this proposal on behalf of the consultant/firm.

Legal Name of Proponent:	
Name of Authorized Representative:	
Title:	
Signature:	
Date:	